Lacson out; Mendoza appointed PNP chief

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2001 ★ 64 PAGES . 5 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 45 ₱15

Economic recovery in 2 years seen

NEWLY designated Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday said it could take the economy at least two years to recover from the "locust years" of the Estrada presidency.

Businessmen, however, voiced optimism local stocks and the country's battered currency would perk up with the installation of a business-friendly administration of President Gloria

ECONOMIC/ A20

UN chief praises RP 'people power'

UNITED Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan yesterday praised the Philippines' peaceful transfer of power as "a victory for democracy" and said he looked forward to working with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Chinese government also congratulated Ms Macapagal, who was sworn in as President on Saturday after Joseph Ejercito Estrada stepped

UN/ A20

Charges vs Erap pressed

But GMA says no deal with ex-President

By Christine Avendaño
and Martin P. Marfil

THE NEWLY installed Macapagal administration yesterday ruled out any deal with ousted President Joseph Estrada who faces a barrage of criminal charges, including economic plunder that is punishable by death.

Anti-Estrada congressmen and militant groups are pressing President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to move swiftly in bringing her deposed predecessor to trial and ban him from leaving the country to avoid prosecution.

"We don't intend to strike any deal with Mr. Estrada and his cohorts. Let the axe fall where it may," Renato Corona, the newly designated presidential spokesperson, said.

"How can we compromise a criminal case? We can't even waive criminal liability because it is what we wanted?" he told reporters after the thanksgiving Mass celebrated by Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin at the Edsa Shrine yesterday.

Asked whether Ms Macapagal would grant Estrada pardon, Corona replied: "I don't think so, why should we?"

Ms Macapagal earlier rejected an outright amnesty for Estrada, saying she would let justice take its course.

In his talk with reporters, Corona said two groups of lawyers had filed with the Ombudsman a complaint of economic plunder against Estrada even before his impeachment trial broke down last week.

In his Senate trial, Estrada was accused of accepting P400 million in "jueteng" payoffs, receiving P130 million in tobacco tax kickbacks, and acquiring billions of pesos in ill-gotten wealth to finance a lavish lifestyle for himself and his mistresses.

Corona said that before Estrada stepped down on Saturday, he and two other representatives of Ms Macapagal rejected a request by Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara that the ousted leader be given immunity from suit.

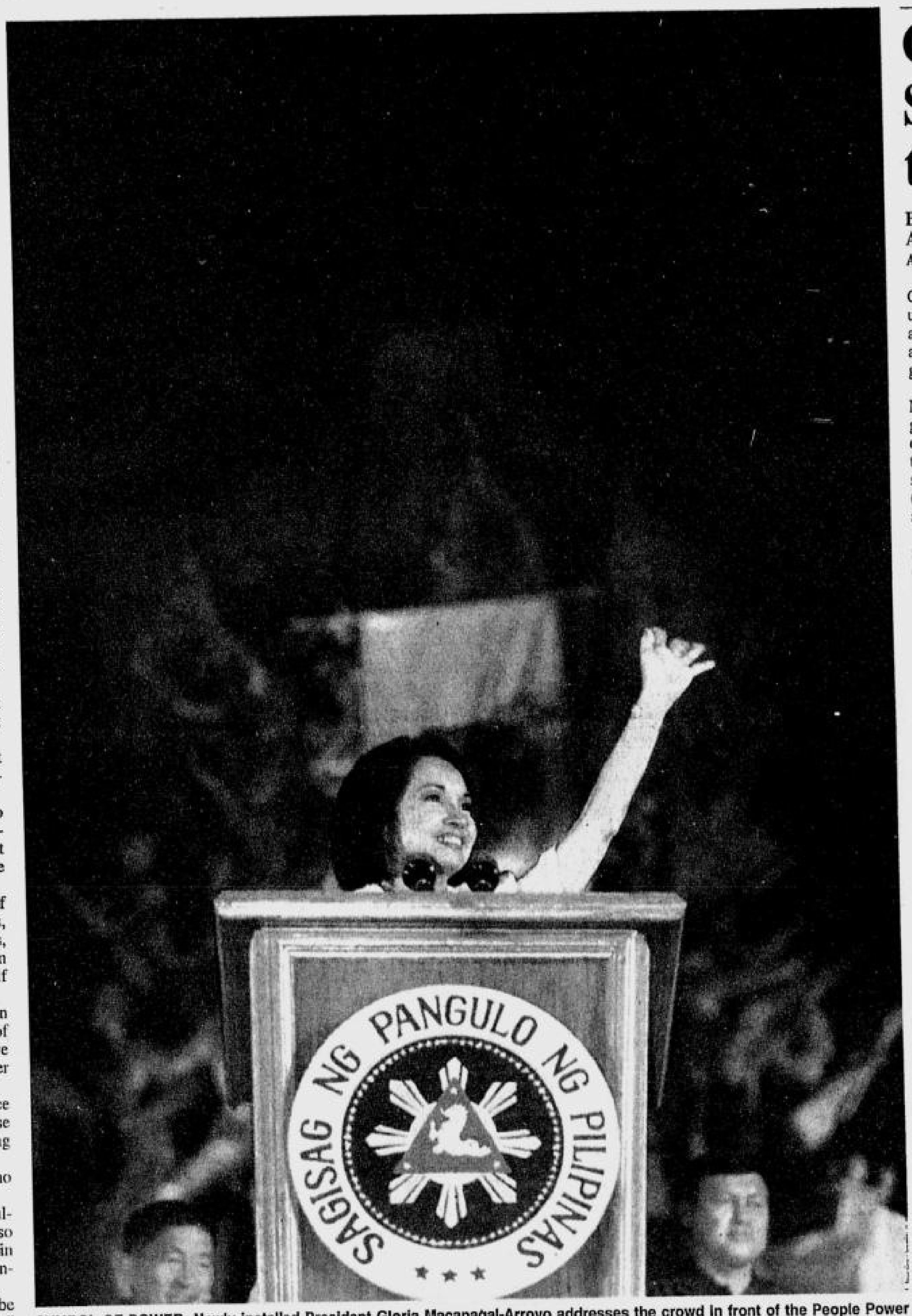
Corona said he, along with incoming Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo and former Defense Secretary Renato De Villa, went to Malacañang to secure Mr. Estrada's resignation letter.

But he said his negotiating team was told no resignation letter was forthcoming.

"We were asked instead to virtually exculpate him from any criminal liability. They also wanted an assurance that (Estrada) was to retain all his assets, all his money and all of his mansions," Corona said.

"He also wanted a guarantee that he won't be prosecuted civilly, criminally and politically,"

CHARGES/ A21


SAGISAG NG PANGULO NG PILIPINAS

SYMBOL OF POWER: Newly installed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo addresses the crowd in front of the People Power Monument shortly after a thanksgiving Mass at the Edsa Shrine on Sunday.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Gloria urged: Shun politicos, turncoats

By Agnes E. Donato,
Andrea Trinidad-Echavez
and Rocky Nazareno

CIVIL society and business leaders yesterday urged President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to appoint non-politicians as Cabinet secretaries and accommodate leaders of nongovernment organizations in her circle of advisers.

"All debts have been cancelled. (Ms Macapagal) can start on a clean slate and form a government based only on competence, honesty, credibility and commitment to the ideals that propelled the events that brought her where she is now," the "Pagbabago sa Pilipinas" (Change in the Philippines) movement said in a statement.

Businessman Allan Ortiz, one of the movement's convenors, said it was through the efforts of civil society that Ms Macapagal rose to power. "She must, therefore, be answerable to the people and not the political parties."

Other members of Pagbabago are Guillermo Luz of the Makati Business Club, Dan Songco of the Code-NGO alliance, Bukidnon Rep. Neric Acosta, lawyer Francis Pangilinan, film director Jose Javier Reyes, art curator Marian Roces and stage actor Bart Guingona.

Militant groups consider Pagbabago's demands not enough.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) is asking Ms Macapagal to immediately fire officials of the Estrada administration who defected at the 11th hour.

They included Defense Secretary Orlando

GLORIA/ A 21

Scramble on for positions in Cabinet

By Christine Avendaño,
Rocky Nazareno
and Armand Nocum

THE JOSTLING for Cabinet positions intensifies as President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo starts holding office in Malacañang this morning.

Ms Macapagal will hold her "first" Cabinet meeting after leading flag-raising ceremonies and conferring with the Palace staff, according to her spokesperson, Renato Corona.

Expected to attend the meeting are members of her new team and the acting heads of departments and other government agencies.

After the appointment of former Sen. Alberto Romulo as finance secretary on Saturday, the guessing game continues as to who will make it to the Cabinet.

Ms Macapagal appointed Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza as Philippine National Police (PNP) chief after she accepted on Saturday the "irrevocable" resignation of Director General Panfilo Lacson, Corona said.

"(Lacson) conveyed to us his desire to avail (himself) of his retirement, to which he is entitled," he told reporters yesterday after a thanksgiving Mass at the Edsa Shrine.

Ms Macapagal also named Renato Valencia as chief of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

SCRAMBLE/ A21

People's coup: Bloodless, constitutional, democratic

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

A PEOPLE'S coup removed President Joseph Ejercito Estrada from office last week. That coup was not only bloodless but also constitutional and democratic.

The Armed Forces played a pivotal role in that coup but they didn't fire a shot or deployed tanks to topple the Estrada administration. They withdrew their support for the Estrada presidency, precipitating its collapse, and aligned themselves with the people demanding Estrada's resignation all over the country.

The defining characteristic of that coup is that it was a democratic upheaval, driven by the people in their exercise of their sovereign right to remove a leader who has failed them.

The other perspective from which to view the people's coup is that it was a popular movement that corrected the error of having elected Estrada as President on a populist platform. In People Power II, the people acted to halt the devastation inflicted by the Estrada presidency, through its incompetence and venalities, on the economy, the political institutions and the presidency, which suffered its worst degradation during the Estrada administration.

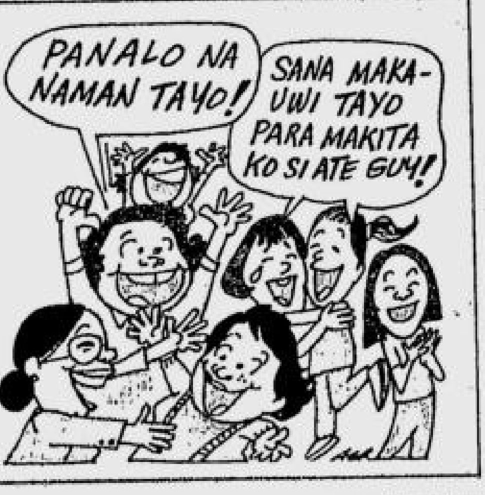
And it took only two and a half years for the people to launch this correction action—unprecedented in post-war Philippine history.

The debate over whether it was people power or the military rebellion that was mainly responsible for the overthrow of President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 has remained unresolved. The role of the military in the fall of the Estrada administration raises the question of whether military intervention is becoming indispensable in the resolution of political crisis in Philippine democracy.

The breakaway of the Armed Forces

PEOPLE/ A21

Maids rejoice with victory parade in HK


PANALO NA NAMAN TAYO!
SANA MAKA-UWI TAYO PARA MAKITA KO SI ATE GUY!

HONG KONG—Sunday is always party time for thousands of Filipino maids working in Hong Kong, who fill the parks to sing, dance, eat and drink on their one day off each week.

But this week, the festivities turned particularly raucous as the women cheered the downfall of Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

MAIDS/ A20

ERAP'S FINAL HOURS

'I need to be alone. Go home'

By Armand N. Nocum
and Christine Avendaño

A DEPRESSED Joseph Ejercito Estrada kept mainly to himself in Malacañang on the eve of his ouster from the presidency Saturday, worrying close relatives and friends who had stuck around to the end for fear that he might harm himself.

"*Umuwi na kayo, kailangan kong mag-isa* (Go home, I need to be alone)," one of the more than 60 persons who remained at the Presidential Residence quoted Estrada as telling them near midnight Friday.

"No one did, fearing he may commit suicide. He was so depressed," said a source, who asked not to be named. The source said the President was alone in the conference room for long hours.

Angelito Banayo, the ousted President's assistant for political affairs who was at the residence, said he interpreted Estrada's request for them to leave as an indication of bravery, not despair.

"He wanted his friends and relatives to leave the Palace because he feared the protesters would attack it," Banayo said. This scenario, he added, was impressed upon Estrada by former Defense Secretary Renato de Villa and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes.

"I'll defend the Palace myself," Banayo quoted the President as replying.

I NEED/ A21

WEATHER-
WEATHER
LANG YAN
PARE KO!

Lacson replaced by Mendoza

BY DAVE M. VERIDIANO

MENDOZA

LACSON

PRESIDENT Macapagal Arroyo yesterday designated Leandro Mendoza acting chief of the Philippine National Police after Gen. Panfilo Lacson submitted his resignation to her last Saturday.

Mendoza, one of Lacson's deputies, headed the Transnational Crime Center before his latest appointment. He was among the first ranking police officers to withdraw their support for president Estrada shortly before he was deposed in a bloodless people power action.

Lacson, however, found that it was not so easy to resign from the post he had been appointed to by his friend, Estrada, amid much controversy and from which he made many enemies, both in and outside the service.

Confrontation

Last Saturday, it was learned, while on his way to tender his resignation letter to President Macapagal at her temporary headquarters at the Linden Suites in the Ortigas Center, Lacson was accosted by officers of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa.

Lacson could have been badly assaulted were it not for the intervention of former defense secretary Renato de Villa who was also at the hotel at 10 p.m. last Saturday.

An official of the new administration who saw the incident but who requested anonymity said that Lacson apparently did not know that RAM officers led by former constabulary colonel Billy Bibit, PNP superintendent Eduardo Matillano and other officers whom Lacson had charged in court and had removed from the service were on the second floor of Linden Suites.

The group, which was active in the movement against Estrada, was holding a meeting when they were informed of Lacson's presence in the hotel.

Matillano, Lacson's "mistah" (classmate) in Philippine Military Academy Class '71, convinced his fellow officers that it was time they confronted their ``tormentor" who had made their lives "miserable."

Matillano had been behind the raid of Lacson's office at Camp Crame, Quezon City, during the 1998 presidential elections.

During the raid, Matillano discovered wiretapping equipment and filed charges against Lacson and his men.

The charges were dismissed by the Ombudsman after Estrada became president. Subsequently, Matillano was transferred from Camp Crame to Eastern Visayas. He was later charged with being AWOL before he was finally removed from the service.

The RAM officers reportedly agreed they would simply talk to Lacson, a colleague whom they described as "*naligaw ng landas at nasilaw sa kapangyarihan* (lost and blinded by power)."

The group positioned themselves near the elevator on the ground floor and waited for Lacson.

A few minutes later, the elevator door opened and there was Lacson about to step out.

Insult

Lacson reportedly saw the group and, apparently sensing they were up to something, tried to close the elevator door.

Bibit, however, blocked the door while Matillano called out to Lacson who ignored him.

"I called to him (Lacson's) but he turned his back. It was an insult to me," Matillano said in a telephone interview.

Witnesses said Lacson repeatedly pressed the elevator buttons but the group rushed toward him and grabbed him by the hand. As they were grappling, Bibit came from behind Matillano and held Lacson by his jacket.

De Villa, the proverbial cooler head, appealed to the group to let Lacson go. The former top cop was only with his aide-de-camp at the time.

De Villa then escorted Lacson to the latter's car and boarded it with the outgoing PNP chief who was reportedly in shock.

Others who witnessed the incident were former PNP chief deputy director general Roberto Lastimoso and retired PNP chief superintendent Rodolfo Garcia.

New PSG chief

Aside from Mendoza, Ms. Macapagal appointed Glen Rabonza acting commander of the Presidential Security Group, vice Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Diaz.

Mendoza was third in command of the PNP under Lacson. He rose through the ranks to become director for intelligence before being promoted to head the Philippine Center on Transnational Crime.

He is a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy and has been awarded five distinguished service medals. *With Christine Avendaño and Reuters and AFP reports*

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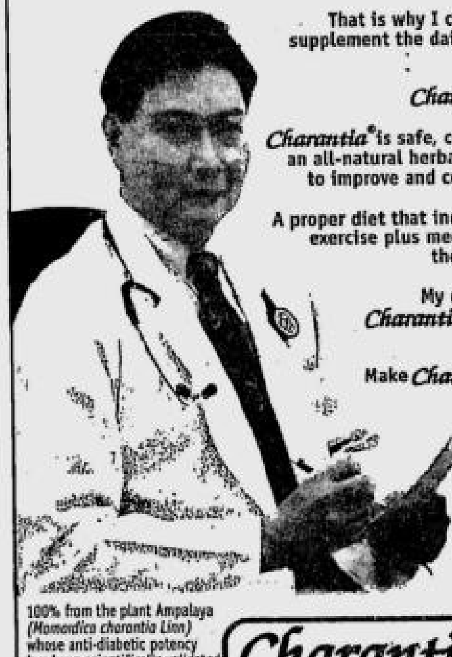

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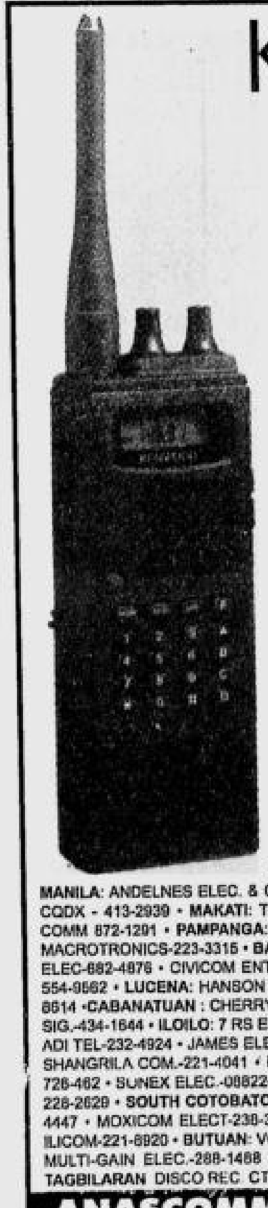

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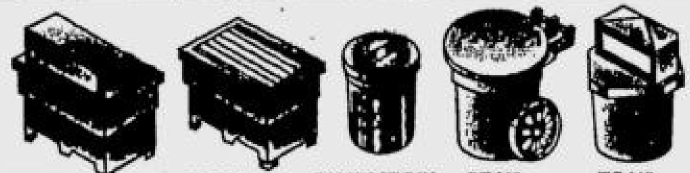

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THE STAR witness whose testimony helped fuel a popular revolt that ousted President Estrada urged the public yesterday to support her bank, which was allegedly used by the deposed leader to launder dirty money.

Equitable PCI Bank senior vice-president Clarissa "Kissa" Ocampo, whose testimony was crucial in turning public sentiment against Estrada, appeared in huge paid newspaper advertisements calling on the public to "stand behind the bank as solidly as you have expressed your support for my colleagues and me."

Ocampo urged the public to ignore calls from protesters to boycott the bank, saying its senior management supported her in uncovering evidence against the former president.

Ocampo became an instant heroine after testifying in Estrada's graft trial that the deposed leader maintained a P500-million trust account using the false name Jose Velarde.

The Senate impeachment court, voting along party lines, later blocked introduction of other bank documents, which would prove Estrada had also hidden some P3.23 billion in allegedly ill-gotten wealth. *AFP*

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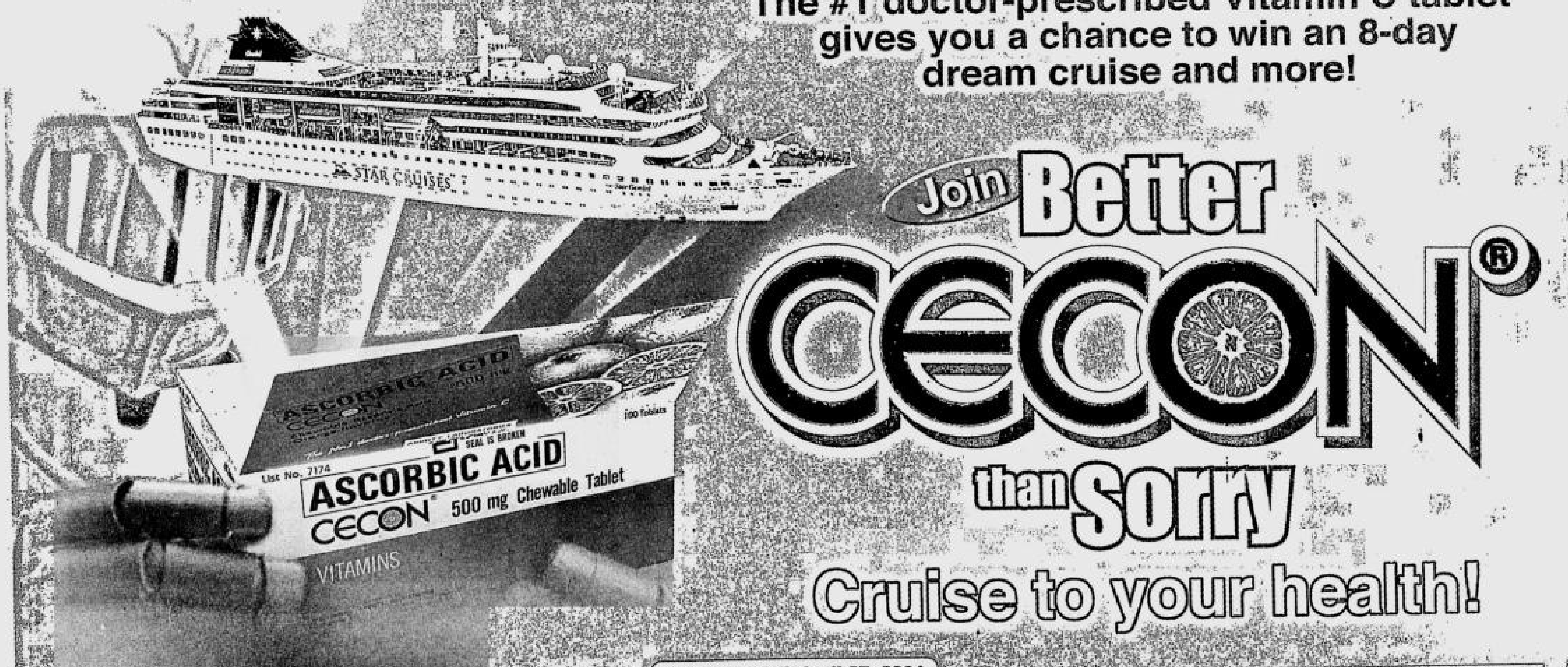

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Macapagal family's political muscle now more formidable

BY TONETTE OREJAS
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SAN FERNANDO,Pampanga—With the assumption of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the highest office in the country, the political prospects of the Macapagal family have been considerably enhanced.

President Macapagal is herself the daughter of a former president, Diosdado Macapagal, who served for a single term from 1961 to 1964.

A half-sister, Cielo Macapagal-Salgado, is a former vice governor of Pampanga.

But reaction to other Macapagal family members serving in public office are decidedly mixed, with some comments verging on criticism of another political dynasty in the making.

On Saturday, the day Ms Macapagal was sworn in as president, leaders of non-government organizations aired on national television a suggestion that Juan Miguel "Mikey" Macapagal-Arroyo, the President's eldest son, abandon plans to run for vice governor of Pampanga.

Mikey, 32, has set his sights on the post beginning 1999 and has in fact mustered enough support from mayors belonging to Lakas-NUCD, his mother's party vehicle.

Warning over the undesirability of political dynasties, the NGO leaders said they were opposed to the idea of having any other Macapagals or Arroyos in public positions.

Expectedly, one of those opposed to the idea of a Macapagal dynasty was Pampanga Vice Gov. Clayton Olalia, who is seeking a second term.

On Sunday, Olalia said it was better for Mikey to "give up his political ambitions so he could help his mother in the daunting tasks ahead."

Mikey, he said, could help and support the province even without being vice governor.

"It will not look good," Olalia said.

Mikey had announced last December that Gov. Manuel Lapid had chosen him as his running mate. Although the Lapid camp said the announcement had been "unilateral," the governor said he would leave it to Ms Macapagal or to the Lakas-NUCD national directorate to choose his running mate.

Mikey appeared unfazed yesterday, saying there could be no dynasty issue since he was running for a local post only.

He said he would return to Pampanga on Monday to consult with local NGOs and his supporters among the youth.

"If they need me there, I will go ahead with my plan. I really want to serve my grandfather's province," said the young Arroyo, who has an MBA from the University of California in Berkley.

"I have the humility and simplicity of the Macapagals," he added.

Mikey said he and his mother would talk things over.

A Macapagal relative here said the President had last year dissuaded her children from entering politics.

Mikey, according to the relative, left for the United States to re-study his plan and returned all the more decided to enter politics.

Another Macapagal who is being urged to enter politics is Arthur Macapagal, according to his eldest sister, Cielo Macapagal-Salgado.

Arthur and Cielo are half-siblings of the President, being the children of the late President Diosdado Macapagal by his first wife, Purita de la Rosa.

The elder Macapagal had married Dr. Eva Macaraeg of Binalonan, Pangasinan, after he was widowed. The President and Diosdado Jr. are the children from the second union.

Cielo is a director of the Philippine National Bank. Arthur, who has served in various government and private corporations, is a director of the Clark Development Corp.

Both Cielo and Arthur are widely reputed in the province as "very honest, efficient officials."

ANNOUNCEMENT

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The organizers of the Sto. Tomas University – Dr. Luis Guerrero Memorial Lecture wish to announce with deep regret the postponement of its 280th Lecture Series on January 23, 2001 to an indefinite future date. The postponement is in consideration of the risk to be taken by its foreign speaker in the light of the current political situation.

THE PHILIPPINE THYROID ASSOCIATION 4th SCIENTIFIC MEETING – POSTPONED

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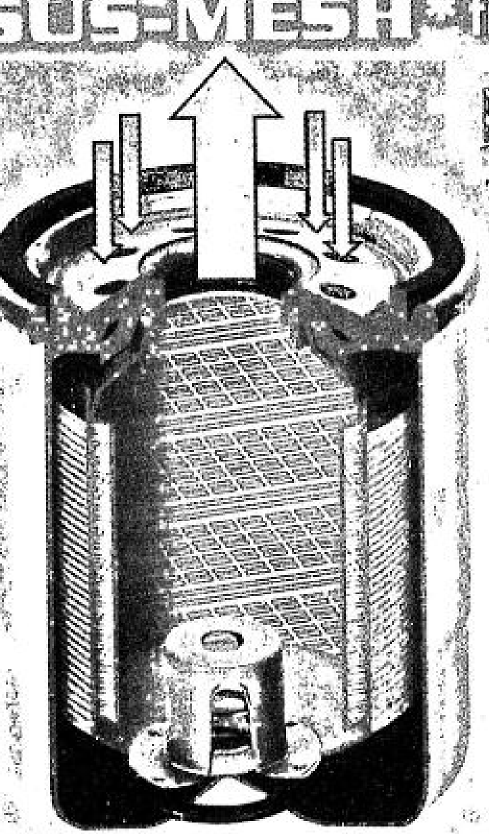

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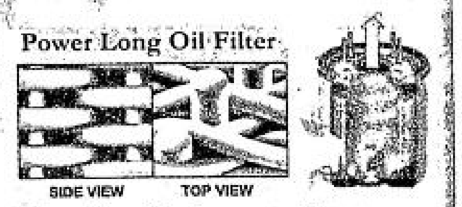

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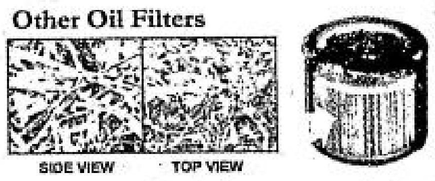

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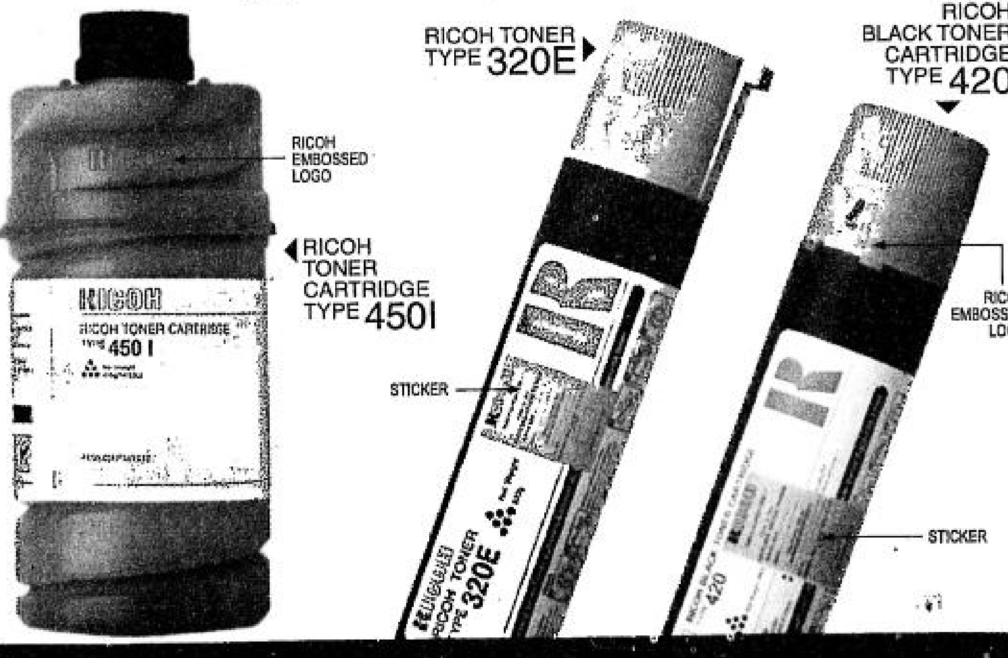

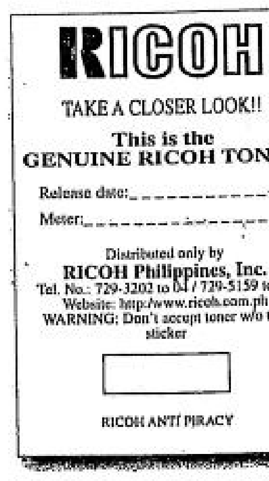

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Erap cronies placed on BID watch list as Ricaforte flees

By TJ Burgonio

IMMIGRATION officers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport have been alerted against the possible departure of five close friends of ousted President Estrada amid reports that many other friends and associates have managed to flee in the past two days.

In a memorandum issued yesterday, Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez told the officers to immediately notify immigration officer Jet Agana should William Gatchalian, Willy Ocier, Eduardo "Moonie" Lim, Lucio Co and Reynaldo "Butch" Tenorio attempt to leave.

Rodriguez said the memorandum should not be interpreted as a hold-departure order, however, "unless there is an existing official hold order."

Sources at the airport said the new administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would be closely monitoring the departure for abroad of known Estrada cronies.

Gen. Florencio Fianza, a former traffic official, has been put in charge of the monitoring activities, the sources said.

The exodus of Estrada's cronies started last Friday when it became evident that the Estrada administration had collapsed after the withdrawal of Armed Forces support.

Among the first to leave were Estrada's main counsel at his impeachment trial, Estelito Mendoza; businessman Jaime Dichaves, who at one stage claimed to own a bank account which Estrada had allegedly set up under a false name; and gambling crony Charlie "Atong" Ang, who was allegedly deeply involved in passing illegal gambling payoffs to Estrada.

Yolanda Ricaforte, Estrada's alleged auditor for illegal gambling payoffs, fled for the United States on Saturday night.

Rumors are rife that Estrada, who left Malacañang on Saturday and is now holed up in his Greenhills residence, also plans to flee abroad, possibly to the United States, although the deposed president has vowed to "live and die" in the Philippines.

Ricaforte and her husband, Tourism Undersecretary Orestes Ricaforte, left on board a Philippine Airlines flight for Los Angeles at around 10 p.m. late Saturday, airport sources said yesterday.

The couple, who flew first-class, had not made a prior booking and checked in at the last minute.

"They were chance passengers and they were the last ones to board," the sources said.

Yolanda Ricaforte was not on any hold-departure order list, immigration officers said.

Mrs. Ricaforte denied being Estrada's auditor for jueteng collections. But she admitted delivering P200 million in checks to Estrada's lawyer, Manuel Serapio, during a Senate investigation of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson's allegations that Estrada received millions of pesos in illegal gambling payoffs.

Mrs. Ricaforte left the country on Oct. 5 last year, days before Singson dropped his bombshell on Estrada's bribe-taking. She returned on Oct. 23 to appear before the Senate blue ribbon committee investigation.

She would have fled again in November after being subjected to intense questioning at the Senate but canceled at the last minute after the media got wind of her plans.

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An incredulous Chavit says he feels vindicated

By Cecil Morella

SINGSON

"I NEVER imagined it would end this way," said a slightly embarrassed Luis "Chavit" Singson, whose revelations triggered the impeachment process and subsequent uprising against president Estrada.

Singson, governor of Ilocos Sur and self-confessed crook and bagman of dirty money, is basking in the aura of accidental stardom after seeing his estranged friend dragged out of office.

As Singson himself freely admits, he was goaded into ratting on Estrada after he was excluded from a legal, money-spinning version of the centuries-old illegal lottery called "jueteng" to which millions of Filipinos are addicted.

He said he went to see a priest before he got the courage to accuse the country's most powerful man of taking about P550 million worth of illegal gambling bribes and government kickbacks from government projects.

Despite his checkered past, Singson's accusations became political bombshells because he was widely known to be a drinking buddy, gambling partner and political ally of Estrada until they had a bitter falling-out.

What the quarrel triggered was one of the most serious corruption scandals in the country, Estrada's impeachment, a groundbreaking trial, an army mutiny and the abandonment of the Cabinet that spelled the president's political doom.

The evidence raked up in the month-long trial threw up dirt on many other prominent personalities in politics, business and the police and showed how the banking system —and even a presidential charity—had supposedly been exploited to launder millions of pesos in dirty money.

Singson testified how Charlie "Atong" Ang, another Estrada friend, allegedly gathered together the country's jueteng operators to pay the president protection money equivalent to three percent of their monthly turnover and how Singson himself supposedly delivered attaché cases full of money every fortnight at the presidential palace.

He recounted how he allegedly stole about P130 million in tobacco taxes for Estrada and helped deliver the cash in shopping bags to the president's house.

Other witnesses spoke of how the president earned a fortune from a trader friend later indicted in the country's worst stock manipulation scandal and of how the leader allegedly shielded this friend when securities regulators had him on their sights.

The daily hearings, which became the country's most popular show on television and radio, detailed how the president and his lawyer allegedly tried to legitimize the funds by putting them into bank accounts, one of them holding more than P1.2 billion, using false names.

Witnesses recounted how friends of the president supposedly took steps to cover up the paper trail by assuming ownership of these assets using methods which bordered on forgery.

"Marcos was smart. Estrada was smarter," senior prosecutor Rep. Joker Arroyo said when he compared Estrada with the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, the only other Filipino leader toppled by a military-backed popular uprising.

But the ventilation of the alleged crimes in the press helped galvanize public opinion against Estrada. When the senator-judges voted to exclude potentially damning evidence last week, their action sparked huge protests which invited military intervention.

The military and police brass finally informed Estrada on Friday that he had lost their support, triggering the mass resignation of his Cabinet. When he refused to step down, the Supreme Court removed him by judicial order.

"I feel vindicated because my only weapon was the truth," the self-proclaimed bagman Singson said after Estrada left the presidential palace for the last time.

"Eradicating jueteng is a simple matter provided we have a sincere leader," he added. *AFP*

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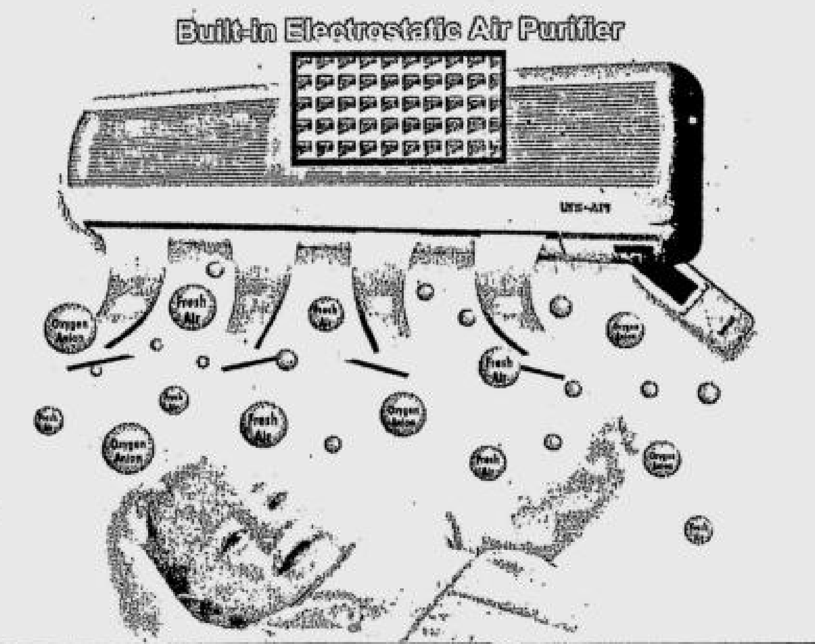

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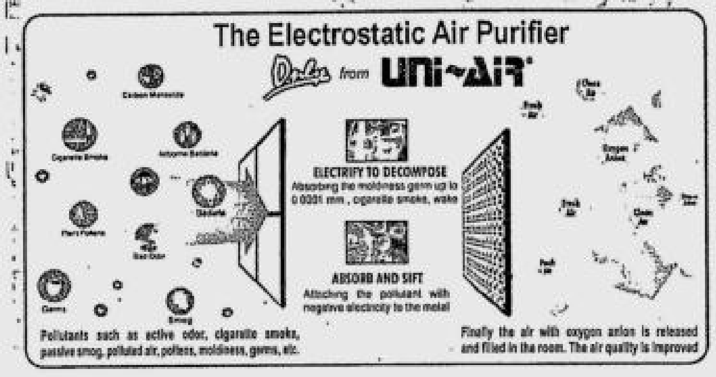

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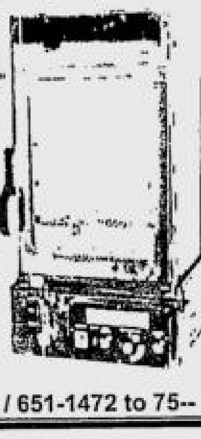

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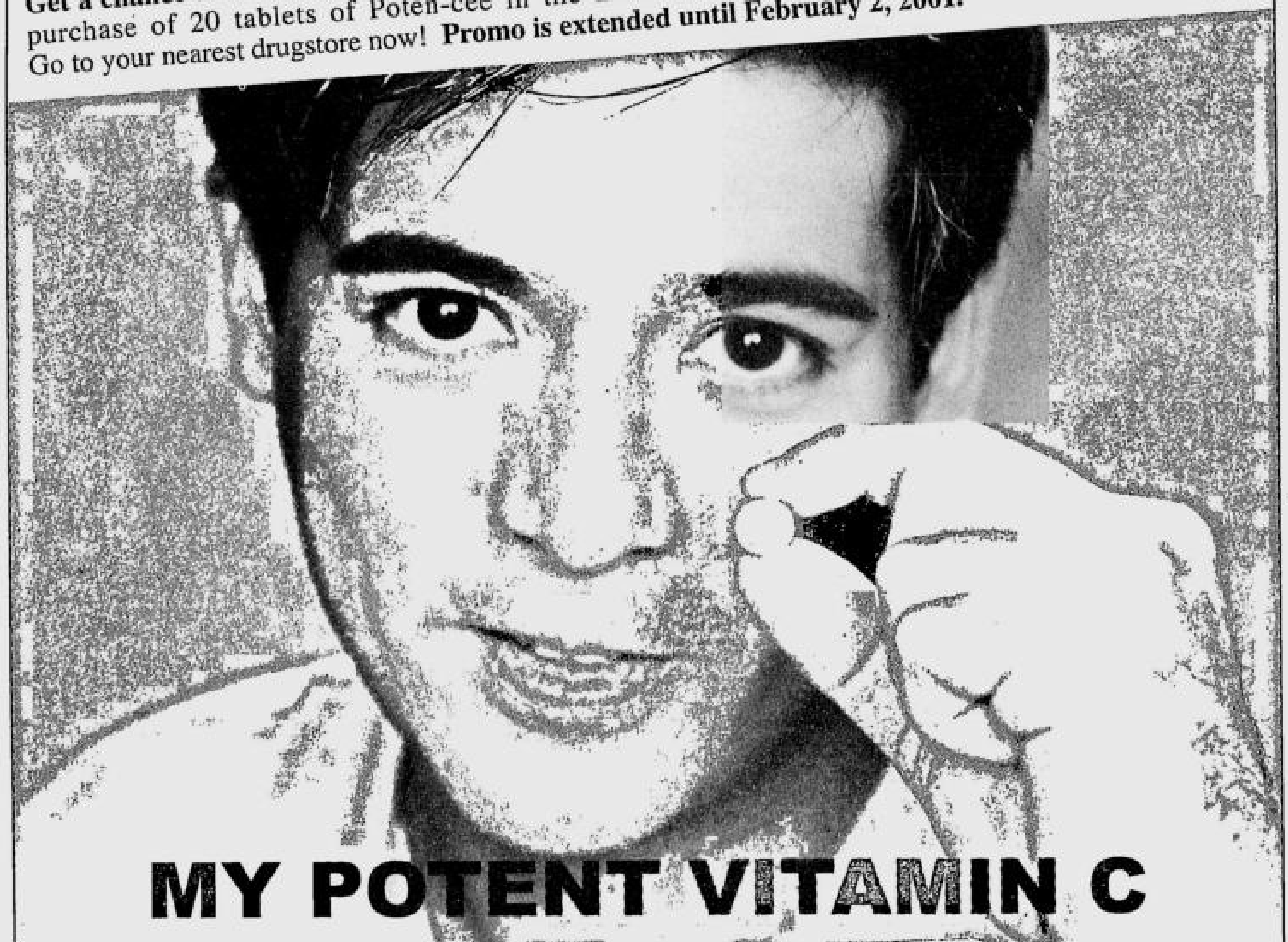

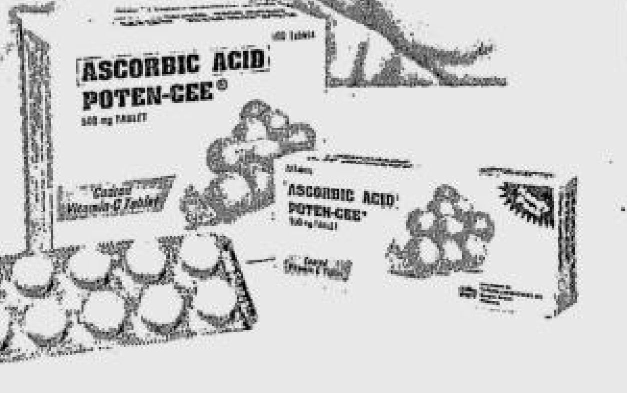

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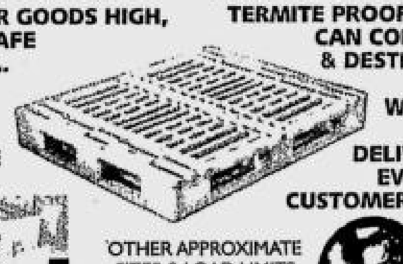

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Leftists to seek release of political prisoners

By Raul C. Dancel

LEFTIST groups in the anti-Estrada movement said yesterday they would ask President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to release some 200 political prisoners as part of her "first 100 days agenda."

"We will consider it as a sign of goodwill," Nathanael Santiago, secretary general of the Bayan Muna political party, said in an interview.

Santiago said Bayan Muna and other leftist organizations would ask Ms Macapagal in a meeting tomorrow to pardon two men convicted in the assassination of United States intelligence officer Col. James Rowe and hundreds of other political prisoners and detainees.

In December last year, the Estrada administration announced it would release 200 political prisoners following the signing of a peace agreement with a breakaway communist group.

These included Donato Continente and Juanito Itaas, alleged members of the communist-led "hit squad" Alex Boncayao Brigade, who were both sentenced to life for the murder of Rowe on April 21, 1989.

Rowe, who was deputy commander of the Joint US Military Assistance Group, was ambushed in Quezon City while on his way to work.

The Supreme Court has already downgraded Continente's role in Rowe's murder from principal to "accomplice" and human rights groups had expected him to be released in December last year.

In a 37-page decision, the high court also downgraded the charge of "frustrated murder" on the wounding of Rowe's driver, Joaquin Vinuya, to "attempted murder."

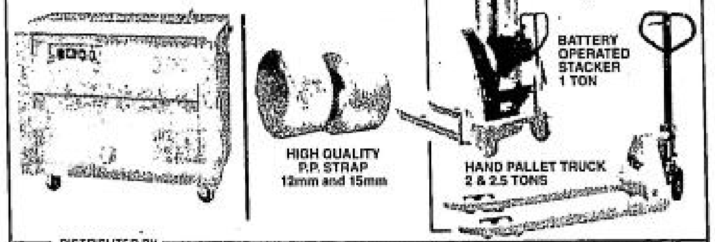
As a result, the Supreme Court "modified" Continente's life sentence to a minimum of 12 years and six months and a maximum of 17 years for both counts.

Continente has served 11 years and four months of his sentence. He was arrested on June 16, 1989 and convicted on Feb. 27, 1991. He was twice recommended for pardon and release during the Ramos administration as part of confidence-building measures preparatory to peace talks with communist rebels. But then US President Bill Clinton blocked the initiative, requesting the Philippine government not to release Continente.

The high court maintained that Juanito Itaas was the principal accused in Rowe's murder and Vinuya's attempted murder. It gave weight to the appeal of Continente's lawyers that he was not part of the "conspiracy" in the murder of Rowe.

Bayan Muna's Santiago said the last time that leftist groups and human rights organizations broached the issue of releasing political prisoners to the new president was in October last year.

At the time, he said, Ms Macapagal was "non-committal," but considered the request as something that she would have to consider should she pursue plans to hold peace talks with the National Democratic Front/Communist Party of the Philippines.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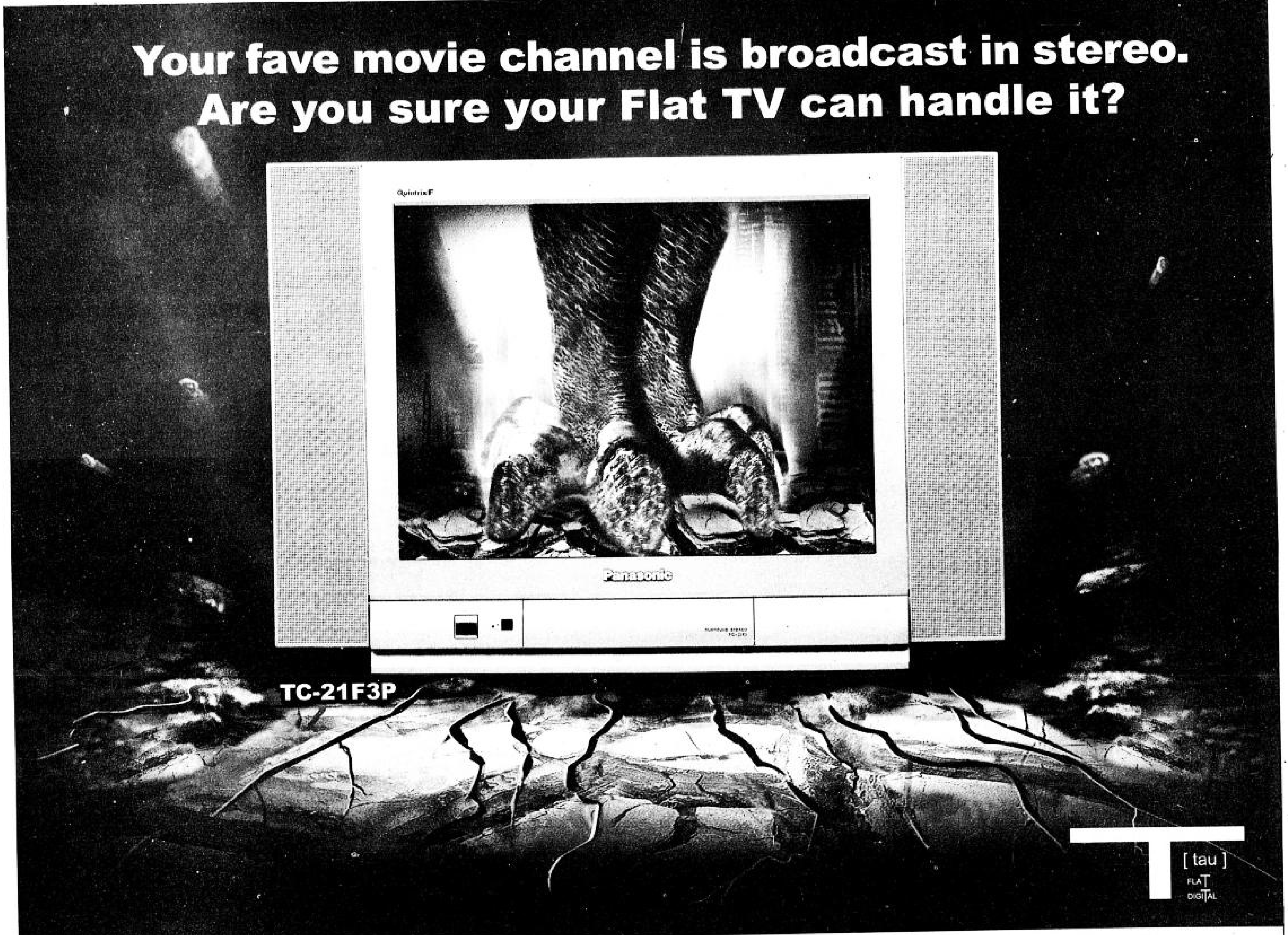
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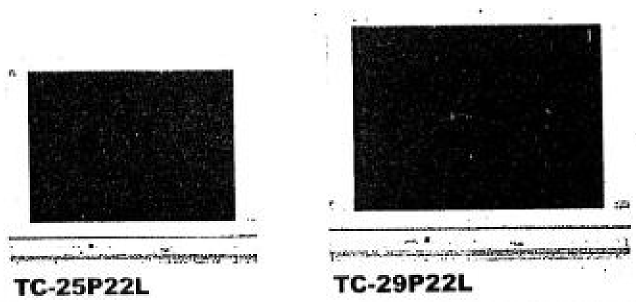

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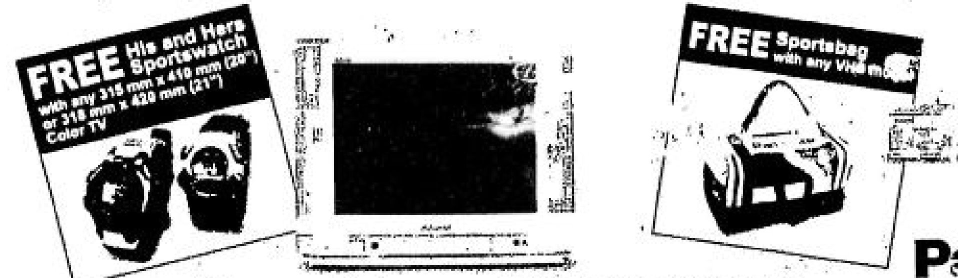
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Nothing personal

EDITORIAL

IN HER inaugural speech, President Macapagal promised not to make the same mistakes as her predecessor. Which instantly reminded us that one of Joseph Estrada's more glaring mistakes was his relations with the press. His mind-set was that the press was either for or against him. Sure, ours is a personalistic society where "nothing personal" (*walang personalan*) is a joke. But not to Estrada.

When he went on a charm offensive for our benefit at which he was superb, he expected only good news from thereon in this paper. It does not work that way. The presidency is a public trust. So is our job. The job calls for us to keep the faith with the people's right to know. For the public good, the President and the media must maintain an open relationship, yes, even friendly for access purposes. The press is always hungry for access to the President being the country's No. 1 news source. That's about it. Beyond that is excess. This is Journalism 101. But did Estrada ever get it? But then, that was probably a bit much to expect from a man who didn't do his homework for Presidency 101.

He rebuked us when we painted a picture of him with a lighted cigarette soon after he said he had quit smoking. He demanded to know why the INQUIRER photographer was focused on him as though always waiting for him to make a mistake. We countered that it was because he was the President. He was taken aback. Like he couldn't believe what we were saying (neither did we). Or he believed we were at it again: "biased reporting" to "destabilize" his administration.

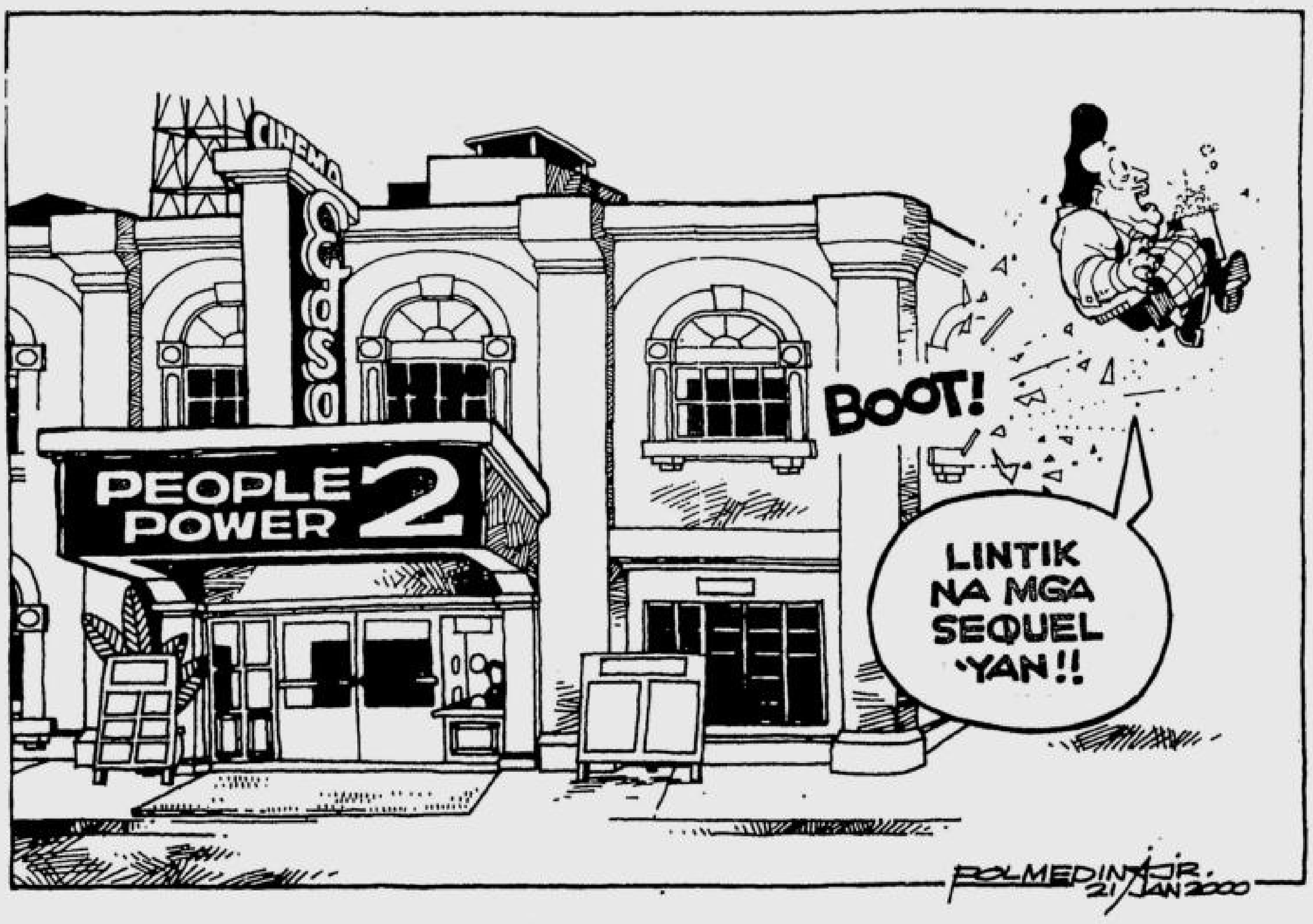
Earlier in his term, the former President lambasted us for reporting the P10-million renovation of what was once called the Guest House which he had transformed into the Presidential Residence. Had we known then what we know now about his passion for architecture and interior decoration, we might have indulged his taste for the finer things in life. But only if the cost of the plush renovations came out of his own pocket. His friends paid for it, he said. Fine. End of story until his many friends began cropping up on Page 1 as gamblers, smugglers, stock manipulators, wheeler-dealers, fugitives from justice, influence peddlers, etc. all of whom he defended. The bad news about his buddies he blamed on the INQUIRER. We didn't know where he was coming from. Perhaps, from the movies where he only got praise releases.

Anyway, Estrada kept his dubious company as his "Midnight Cabinet" when the gaming and the drinking went on till the wee hours. This was not only a signature Estrada lifestyle at the Palace. It seemed to be what his presidency was all about. It was about friendships and loyalties. All for one and one for all. Friends are for keeps. Friends give as much as he takes. His nickname Erap said it all. His *kumpare* mentality was set in cement. This proved hazardous to the INQUIRER.

It was Estrada's bosom buddies (eight of them, the INQUIRER has since learned) who imposed an advertising boycott on the INQUIRER. Not exactly on Estrada's say so, we were informed. He only had to complain about this paper and his *kumpares* did the rest. Airlines, telecom firms, banks, real estate, the movie industry and businesses big and small, pulled out their ads. Some who initially stood their ground were threatened by a BIR audit. One advertiser told us that he did not want to pull out his company's ad but he had no choice. Ad revenues are the lifeblood of any media outlet. For five months, the INQUIRER bled. With the stunning support we got from our readers, Estrada was "people powered" even then. During a "reconciliation" dinner of sorts hosted by Estrada, we again explained why the INQUIRER is what it is. He didn't get it. We had broken bread together. We were friends again. And what are friends for?

Being friends with a President is certainly a privilege. But if you are in the media, you must learn a trick: How to balance the privilege with your job description. Even President Aquino, whom the INQUIRER unabashedly supported against Marcos, was hurting from this paper's reporting about her governance that at one point she declared she was sorry that she has restored press freedom. The Macapagal administration can learn from Fidel Ramos. He took it on the chin. Never personally. He did not attack the press. He presented and explained his version of the bad news about him. He understood and respected the functions of the press. That's why, unlike Estrada, he never accused the press of trying to destabilize his administration.

We extend a hand of friendship to the new administration. The lesson is: The INQUIRER is only hazardous to those people in government who betray the public trust.



To grafters: You can't get away with it

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

MY granddaughter, a precocious 5-year-old, wanted to come with us when we went to Edsa last Friday along with her mother, her tita, her teenaged sister (who was still a baby during People Power 1) and some friends.

"You're still too small," her mother told her. "Why do you want to come with us?"

She replied, "I want to tell the President: You can't get away with it."

You can't get away with it. I think that is the most important message that the ouster of President Estrada sends to other leaders, present and future. That there is always Judgment Day. That you may be able to get away with it sometimes but there will eventually be a day of reckoning when you will have to pay for your sins.

Think what the message could have been had Erap been able to get away with his sins. That you can steal billions of pesos, bribe people, lie, gamble, womanize, drink, be as corrupt and greedy as the devil himself, and you would go scot-free as long as you have enough senators in your pocket to protect you. Think what that message would do to our children, the future leaders of our nation. It would teach them that the saying "crime does not pay" which their elders have been telling them is a lie, that crime pays after all. It would turn the morals of our society topsy-turvy.

You can't get away with it. I suggest these words of wisdom from the mouth of a babe should be used as a motto by the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to send the message to future grafters that there is no escape, even if you become President. You can't get away with it; the people are watching.

People Power 2 that toppled Erap is unquestionably the triumph of the Filipino people. The withdrawal of support by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police prompted the resignation of Cabinet members like falling dominoes that left Erap helpless. But their withdrawal of support was prompted by the sight of the million people on Edsa calling on Erap to resign. They have lost confidence in him. How ironic that the President who was elected with the biggest majority in Philippine history would be ousted by the same people who elected him less than halfway in his term.

People Power 1 had Jaime Cardinal Sin, Radio Veritas and Butz Aquino's August 21 Movement coaxing the people to go to Edsa to protect with their bodies Enrile, Ramos and Honasan whom Marcos forces wanted to arrest for plotting against him. But People Power 2 was spontaneous; nobody had to call them to mass at Edsa. Minutes after the shameful vote in the Senate when the Dirty Eleven successfully suppressed the truth imprisoned in that mysterious second envelope, indignant citizens gathered voluntarily at Katipunan Avenue, at the corner of Timog Avenue and Edsa and other places where they honked horns, banged pots and pans and chanted "Erap Resign!" Then they marched to the Edsa Shrine and People Power 2 was born.

In People Power 1, the people stayed on Edsa for days because they were shielding the anti-Marcos plotters holed up in Camp Crame from the pro-Marcos tanks and soldiers. But in the People Power 2, there were no pro-Erap tanks and soldiers to block. The people stayed there simply to show Erap that they no longer want him and will he please go away. In People Power 1, Enrile and Honasan were heroes; in People Power 2, they were villains.

But as in People Power 1, the people waited and cheered and clapped as one by one the names of generals and Cabinet members who have shifted to the side of the people were announced.

It was a triumph of the Filipino people who have wakened up like a sleeping tiger angered by the realization that the leaders they elected into office were fooling them. It was another shinning moment for the Filipinos, a moment more luminous than People Power 1 which first earned the admiration and respect of the world.

People Power 2 was also the triumph of technology. People learned of the massing of the people through texts and calls from cell phones, only later from radio and television broadcasts.

* * *

This piece would not be complete without paying tribute to my colleagues in journalism who stayed on the job for days and nights to report to the people what was happening minute by minute. To journalists, witnessing and reporting this history-in-the-making is like adrenalim being pumped into their bloodstream that keeps them going. It is this type of story that is most exciting and enjoyable to journalists. Many stayed on the job—in the field and in the newsrooms—without sleep, without going home for a shower and change of clothes. They said hello to their families only via the cell phone.

During the wee hours of the morning, tired cameramen and reporters caught a few winks on the grass as they staked out Malacañang and the residences of the President and his mistresses. I admire the television reporters who managed to look fresh and pretty even after long hours of coverage for the 24-hour TV newscasts.

To my fellow journalists, congratulations. You deserve bonuses and pay increases. Keep up the good work.

Dear President

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I WILL dispense with the usual pleasantries and congratulations. We all badly need sleep and can do without more of the platitudes and back-patting we've heard and seen so much over the past several days.

You might have noticed when you delivered your inauguration speech that the loudest cheers were reserved for Hilario Davide Jr., the man who brought honor back to being a lawyer and a politician. I am not saying that only to praise Davide, though I cannot imagine anyone more worth praising these days. I say that only to suggest that the multitude that massed at Edsa—and who will continue to mass there for as long as injustice runs rife—is not possessed of an uncritical mind and can be impressed by a slogan or two, a promise or two, a trick or two. They know who truly fought for Edsa 2, they know what they truly fought Edsa 2 for.

I am glad you mentioned Hilario Davide, who began by giving the impeachment trial unprecedented credibility and ended up giving the public an unprecedented education. I am glad you mentioned the Magnificent 10, the senator-judges who began by acquitting themselves well before the bar of justice and ended up by convicting a felon before the bar of history. I am glad you mentioned Jaime Cardinal Sin and Corazon Aquino who began by calling on the people to recall the spirit of Edsa and ended up by inspiring the people to bring their bodies back to Edsa.

But I am not glad that you completely forgot to mention the activists, the non-government organizations, the people's organizations, the various voluntary and civic organizations that sprouted in virtual and real life, in cyberspace and in the streets, with the sole—and pure—intention of ridding this country of a plague and nursing decency back to health. I am not glad that the only time Satur Ocampo and other Left personalities were mentioned during your happy hour was when one of your companions warned them not to push and shove their way to Mendiola. I am especially not glad that you forgot to mention them while remembering to mention the AFP and PNP officials who swooped down on Edsa at the 11th hour, preening from an exaggerated sense of self-importance and puffing from lack of exercise, such as by marching on the streets.

I know that it is customary to welcome a new President into one's bosom and wish her well. I know that it is customary to give a new President the benefit of doubt, if not trust, and throw in her path, like garlands, words of encouragement and assurance. I know that it is customary after laying down the wreath to get out of mourning clothes and begin life anew.

I can only say I am sorry but I have been sorely tested of late. I have been in Edsa every day since the prosecutors brought their case from the court of law to the court of public opinion, and my joy and amazement at the marvelous things I have seen there was mixed with pain and anger at the hustling and opportunism I have seen there. Victory, as they say, has many parents while defeat is an orphan. That is true. But I do not see why we must rush to embrace the illegitimate parents, or praise them to high heavens.

Yes, I saw the officers of the AFP part the crowd like Moses the Red Sea and strut on the stage afterward, discovering a little late in the day that justice lay not with their commander in chief but with those who fought him. I saw Orly Mercado, dressed in signature black, stride into the platform like Erap himself in his movies, missing only a horse and pistol. Before them, I saw movie stars and singers burst into the stage, like floodwaters overrunning their banks, discovering a little late in the day that their country's future lay not with their benefactor but with those that fought him. I saw Bong Revilla and Nora Aunor there, emerging from out of the darkness when the crowd had swelled to its fullest to proclaim their sudden conversion to the light.

I cannot say I was surprised when Gringo Honasan and Robert Jaworski and Francisco Tatad and Blas Ople came out on radio to ask Erap to resign. I was almost tempted to call up Miriam Defensor-Santiago to thank her for keeping quiet.

The AFP-PNP and the entertainers and the *trapos* were there last Thursday and Friday. But I did not see any one of them in the Senate during the trial, shouting Erap was the greatest threat to the nation, Erap had ceased to entertain, and Erap was the worst *trapo* of all. I did not see any of them in the streets when Erap was waging a war against the INQUIRER and Manila Times and when Erap (with Mercado's help) was trying to wipe the Filipino Muslims off the face of the earth. I did not see them stand on a podium when Erap wanted to bury Marcos among the nation's heroes, when Erap was turning the national interest into Lucio Tan's interest, when Erap was transforming the country into one huge gambling den.

Come to think of it, I did not see you there either.

All I saw where the activists and NGOs and the people's organizations and the civic groups, placard in hand, shuffling their feet round and round till rain and darkness fell while your newfound friends scoffed and jeered.

You say you accept the burden of being President with awe and trepidation. I am glad you do, but beg to suggest new reasons for them. Anyone who has been handed the gift of power largely gratuitously may only be filled with a sense of awe and seek to repay it with gratitude. I do not know that it is a sign of gratitude that you conducted your negotiations with Erap in secrecy while the people waited anxiously outside for justice. I do not know that it is a sign of gratitude that you forget so soon whose shoulders bore you to where you are.

And anyone who has been borne on the tear-drenched or blood-streaked shoulders of the people may only be filled with a sense of trepidation and seek to repay it with humility. Truly, you have reason to stand in awe and trepidation before the world. This was no ordinary event that brought you to power, this was people power in the truest, purest, sense of the word, a people discovering and recovering through education and action their power to right wrongs and build new worlds. The people have not just handed you the opportunity to stand before the Chief Justice and take your oath of office, they have given you the predicament of standing before the bar of their will—the impeachment court supplies an image for it—and acquitting yourself there. We are your people, we are watching.

In the end, I can only wish you well not by reminding you as the Romans did their conquering heroes that all glory is fleeting. I can only wish you well by saying that all glory is deserved.

'Extraordinary action in extraordinary times'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Saturday Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. woke up at 3:30 a.m. as is his wont, and took out the Bible. Randomly opening it as he does every day upon waking up, Davide came upon Isaiah Chapter 62, which, interestingly, dealt with the rebuilding of Zion. It read in part:

"The nations will see your holiness and all the kings your glory. You will be called by a new name which the mouth of Yahweh will reveal. You will be a crown of glory in the hand of Yahweh, a royal diadem in the hand of your God...No longer will you be Forsaken; no longer will your land be called Abandoned...

"Pass through the gates; prepare the way for the people. Build it up, bank up the highway, clear it of stones, raise up a standard for the people...Say to the daughter of Zion, here comes your salvation. Yahweh brings the reward of his victory, his booty is carried before him. They shall be called the holy people, the redeemed of Yahweh; and you shall be called 'The Sought After,' a city no longer abandoned."

Those passages doubtless set the Chief Justice's disposition for that morning's historic task. For by the time Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban called him up at 5:30 a.m. at his office, Davide was quite open to swearing in Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo into the highest post in the land.

The evening before, former Ramos legal adviser Antonio Carpio had called Panganiban to ask if he could alert the Chief Justice about a possible assumption of Macapagal the next day. Arroyo's transition team had been meeting with President Estrada's team, led by Executive Secretary Ed Angara on the manner of his final exit. Davide agreed to stand by and by midnight he called Panganiban to query, "*Wala pa bang* development?" The negotiation was still going on. By dawn that morning, however, news came over radio that a huge throng from Edsa was going to storm Malacañang if the 6 a.m. deadline for the President's resignation was not met. The magistrates worried about possible confrontations between the two forces at Mendiola.

Then came Senate President Aquilino Pimentel's call to Davide to report that Estrada was asking for five to seven days to remain in the Palace; media reports said the former President wanted time to be able to explain his side to his followers. Panganiban feared, however, that this could be "an invitation to a coup" and even greater instability. Earlier the two magistrates had talked about coup reports buzzing all around. Davide at that point was quite clear about not wanting to serve in a military government and to follow the Constitution instead. Court sources said Davide wanted to make the announcement of his readiness to administer the oath of office to Macapagal as he realized this would help stabilize the volatile political situation. Panganiban noted that the Chief Justice could be the moderating influence, inasmuch as even the pro-Erap people trust him (a survey recently showed that Davide is the Filipino most trusted by the people).

Davide tasked Panganiban to make the announcement to the media about his readiness to administer the oath to Macapagal, and to explain its rationale. Initially, the latter had premised his argument on the dictum "*Salus populi est suprema lex* (The welfare of the people is the supreme law)." The magistrates also took "judicial notice" of the fact that with the withdrawal of the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police of their support, the commander-in-chief principle had ceased to operate for Estrada; on the other hand, his executive powers suffered a massive blow when about 90 percent of his Cabinet resigned after the military withdrawal. Moreover, civil society no longer recognized him.

Thus, the magistrates' thinking obviously was that these developments indicated Estrada's inability to rule. Using the highest tribunal's extraordinary powers in what Panganiban termed "extraordinary times," it was thus resorting to "an extraordinary action"—to swear in a new President even as the incumbent one was just about to step down from his post (he was to actually do so two hours later).

Within the hour of the news the 10 other associate justices of the Supreme Court who were in the city, namely, Josue Bellosillo, Jose Melo, Reynato Puno, Vicente Mendoza, Jose Vitug, Bernardo Pardo, Minerva Gonzaga Reyes, Arturo Buena, Leonardo Quisumbing and Sabino de Leon Jr., gathered in Davide's office. A spirited discussion ensued over the various related issues that are now being raised in the media.

"What is this outrage?" one justice was heard demanding. Earlier former Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma came on radio to argue that since there was "no vacancy" in the highest office in the land, swearing in Macapagal could only be justified if there was a revolutionary government. The grave possibility of a coup and countercoup was discussed, which could ensue in a vacuum of power, Justice Puno maintained that the main function of the President is to execute the law through the Cabinet and to administer the Armed Forces and police through the commander-in-chief function. But these functions were impaired with the massive withdrawal of support.

Queries like, are we now acting as a constitutional court or as a revolutionary court, and is the President a revolutionary one or a constitutional one came up. A justice brought up the constitutional provision about the need for a written resolution from the Cabinet in case of a withdrawal of support for the President which, despite the parade of resignations, was absent.

In arguing his reasoning about "an extraordinary action for an extraordinary situation," Panganiban stressed that not all the specific situations could have been thought of by the framers of the Constitution, and that the times called for "an innovative approach" instead of the "traditional" one. It was also pointed out that both the military and the police were unanimous in their decision to withdraw support from Estrada; but what about the highest court's proposed action? It was made clear that the decision to administer the oath of office to Macapagal was not an action of the Court initially but of the Chief Justice only. But clearly the drift was, are you with us or against us? Somos or no somos, as the House members like to say. There was the appeal not to quibble over technicalities, or as Sen. Rodolfo Biazon puts it, "the legal gobbledygook."

In the end the reservations were apparently won over and the justices present that morning expressed unanimity with their chief's position that swearing in Macapagal was legally sound. Moreover, Associate Justice Santiago Kapunan called up from out of town to say that he and Justices Consuelo Ynares Santiago and Angelina Gutierrez were in complete accord with their colleagues on this issue. But then, someone remembered to query how the Court could act when there was not even a petition from Macapagal. The Court always acts on a petition. Quickly contacted, Macapagal faxed a letter informing the Court that since the negotiation talks with the Estrada group have bogged down, she was ready to accept the Chief Justice's announcement that the oath of office could be administered to her.

The official position of the highest tribunal was that it merely concurred with the Chief Justice's position, and less than two hours later, Macapagal took her oath before Davide at the historic Edsa Shrine.

Please, it wasn't just Edsa

LETTER FROM MINDANAO

Carolyn O. Arguillas

I LIVE in the southern part of this country and I commend everyone in Metro Manila and neighboring provinces who rushed to Edsa in indignation (after that infamous 11-10 vote at the Senate Tuesday night) .

I am certain, just as President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was in her inaugural speech last Saturday, "that Filipinos of unborn generations will look back with pride" to that moment in time when the Filipino People showed the rest of the world, for the second time, the power of the people to oust presidents who betray the people.

But to refer to last week's people's uprising as "Edsa 2001" (as Arroyo did) or "Edsa 2" or "Edsa Dos" is so disconcerting, to say the least. Edsa or Metro Manila is not the Philippines.

Last week's uprising was nationwide and not just along Edsa; it was even "international" if we are to add the support of Filipinos abroad who trooped to the Philippine embassies or the overseas Filipino workers who signed up in cyberspace to become e-mandirigmas (cyberwarriors), e-mailing senators and Cabinet members even if their appeals were not heeded by the 11 seNOtors.

It was Filipino Power, pure and simple, a four-day culmination of the series of protest actions nationwide and abroad, for the ouster of Erap.

Together with those in Edsa, Makati and Mendiola, the "*probinsyanos*" of this country and the overseas Filipinos, rose in protest, not for the glory of Gloria but for the glory of the Filipino race, to purge it of the evils that must be exorcised—greed, corruption, cronyism, patronage politics, etc...evils Erap and his minions represented.

Major TV networks are now showing institutional ads on the uprising, focusing only on Edsa and some footage of Makati and Mendiola, as if the rest of the nation did nothing.

In 1986, the year "People Power" became synonymous to "Filipino," those who went to Edsa were referred to as "heroes." Many took pride in proclaiming, "I was there!" But the People's Uprising in Edsa in 1986, was, like this year's, merely a culmination of the years of protests nationwide against Marcos.

Like last week's uprising, 1986 wasn't just Edsa. It was also Filipino Power pure and simple. Let not the Filipinos yet to be born read in history books or view documentaries that it was just Edsa. Because it wasn't. And while Erap's propagandists were downplaying the number of people in Edsa, they could not downplay the fact that millions of Filipinos outside Metro Manila staged marches, rallies and other protest actions to force Erap to resign.

It is not fair to focus only on Edsa and ignore the contributions of the rest of the country and the overseas Filipinos.

In Mindanao, the first to declare Mr. Estrada "guilty" not only of the charges in the four articles of impeachment but also of "war crimes" was the Bangsamoro people whom the deposed President once referred to as "*hindi natin kalahi.*"

No other President in history has harmed the Bangsamoro people more than Erap, the Berdugo ng Moro. In only 935 days as President, he undid decades of peace-building activities in Mindanao and even waged a senseless "all-out war." Erap's 935 days as President were also the bloodiest in Mindanao.

Those in Edsa and Mendiola and those who watched TV Saturday morning cheered as MG-520s and F-5 fighter jets did "persuasion" or "friendly" flights over Edsa and Malacañang. But out there in Marawi, war refugees who saw those footage on TV, cried. As they did when they saw the Philippine flag waved against the backdrop of a sea of humanity. And I cried, too, when, minutes after Ms Macapagal's inaugural speech, a crying Baicon Cayongcat-Macaraya, executive director of the Bangsamoro Youth-Lanao Center for Peace and Development, narrated on the phone what happened at the Amai Pakpak Elementary School where the evacuees watched Saturday's events on TV.

"We cried," she said, "because we're hopeful the new administration will attend to the problems in Mindanao now. The evacuees hope they can now return home (1,200 families are still in the evacuation centers, a thousand of them since March 2000 while another 769 families are still seeking refuge in relatives' homes there).

"But they (evacuees) cried, as I did, when the helicopters and planes were shown on TV. These were the same aircraft that bombed their villages but they are now being used peacefully. They asked me, 'why can these aircraft be used peacefully there but they are used violently here?' The waving of the Philippine flag also made them cry because they were reminded how the soldiers waved the flag from the minaret of a bombed-out mosque. *Bakit daw magagamit naman pala* peacefully '*yung mga* helicopter, *eroplano at* flag?'

"When they saw (AFP Chief of Staff) Reyes and (Defense Secretary) Mercado on TV last Friday afternoon, many evacuees said, '*sana totohanin na nila ang pagbaliktad*' but an elderly woman asked, '*kay nagbaliktad na sila* Reyes *ug* Mercado, *dili na sila mubomba sa* Mindanao (Because Reyes and Mercado have defected to the people, they won't bomb Mindanao anymore)?'"

In early November, Ms Macapagal was handed by Mindanao leaders led by Fr. Eliseo Mercado Jr. a proposal of the first things she must do for Mindanao when she assumes the presidency: ceasefire, resumption of peace talks, demilitarization of Mindanao, return the evacuees back to their villages, representation of Mindanaoans in the Cabinet, etc.

I had hoped her inaugural speech would include her peace agenda, even if only to announce a ceasefire and the plan to reconstitute a peace panel (that should not be headed by a retired military official) so the peace talks can resume.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the National Democratic Front are waiting for her to do just that. The new peace panel that would negotiate with the MILF should also look into the 1996 peace pact with the Moro National Liberation Front.

Ms Macapagal should take advantage of the openness of these groups to talk peace. And she must do it NOW, not tomorrow, because Erap's well-financed loyalists might just unleash their forces in Mindanao and elsewhere to destabilize her administration.

Madame President, please don't take so long. Mindanao, and the rest of the country, have waited so long.

Empowered vigilance in a 'balimbing' republic

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is probably discovering, with simultaneous delight and consternation, that she had legions of secret supporters and hidden allies all along, in this, our reestablished *balimbing* republic. As the Erap administration finally burned to a black cinder in the spontaneous combustion of people power last week, many politicians saw the light and the wisdom of a timely conversion. Such was the raging energy and iron unity of ordinary citizens demanding justice, that they drew into the vortex of Edsa 2, the whole nation and even most of the President's men.

Now, with several thousand juicy government positions to fill, and mid-term elections coming in May, a bumper crop of the Philippine national fruit is ready for harvest. Discernment between opportunistic hypocrisy and genuine sincerity will be difficult. To grade the eager applicants, a search committee has been employed, President Macapagal told her first person-to-person interviewer from media, Korina Sanchez. The latter was herself ripening to a sweet and multi-faceted obsequiousness, for the delectation of the new President.

Like a midsummer's mating swarm of *gamo-gamo*, the *balimbings* and the already-connected have begun the frenetic process of finding their places in the newly established hive. They will be fighting tooth and nail for the favors of the queen and the drones guarding the freshly acquired honey pot of power. Soon, many will be filled by its intoxicating draughts, which are in equal parts, hubris, ambition and forgetfulness.

The hardiest, most ornery of weeds, need not apply, like Ernie Maceda, Kit Tatad and Juan Ponce Enrile. Having "been there and done that," they've nothing more to offer but the hollow smirks and superior attitudes of those who think they've cheated history's awful judgment. By craftily conspiring to conceal the truth contained in that second envelope, they blew Erap to kingdom come instead, and reserved for themselves, seats for a long ride on the cold ship infamy. They will be reviled and irrelevant together with the rest of the 11 colluding senator-judges. They are bereft of the people's esteem, even as they were unwittingly helpful to history's unpredictable trajectory.

There were others who pathetically tried to justify their miserable existences even after they had already exposed, metaphorically, their proverbial private parts in public. One was Gringo Honasan, who was reportedly offering to act as a liaison between the pro- and anti-Erap forces at the height of the people power rallies. Perhaps he'd rather be out playing soldier bang-bang again than all this your-honor stuff. Except they may not be hiring mercenaries in the Armed Forces anymore, judging by the professionalism and good judgment of Gen. Angelo Reyes.

Then there was Robert Jaworski, Esq., who was pitifully fumbling and mumbling a garbled explanation of the intricacies of materiality and relevance of evidence to justify his shameless vote on the second envelope. After that embarrassing performance he surely would rather be playing in a different sort of court than the impeachment. His punishment and ours? Three more years of him sitting on the Senate bench in the glare of public disdain.

There is probably no truth to the rumor that lawyer Estelito Mendoza promptly left the country out of pure shame at Jaworksi's impersonation of a lawyer-judge. If indeed he left, he probably had other reasons to flee. What a low comedy! The brilliantly technical Mendoza should be disbarred from the practice of the law for foul things he did with the Velarde accounts. Meanwhile Jaworski, basketball's living king of technical fouls, insists on his legal and judicial erudition as he sits in the Senate making more laws.

Our recent experiment with impeachment revealed important aspects of the Constitution, especially in regard to certain fractions. First is the one-third rule that applies to Congress' power for initiating impeachments, and next, the two-thirds rule in the Senate required for conviction. In effect, a minority in the House can always impeach a sitting President, while a minority in the Senate can enforce an acquittal. These may appear to be countervailing weights, but whenever the opposition is a mere minority in the House and a strong majority in the Senate, the President can be impeached and convicted. I hope this can lead to a functional system of checks and balances among the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, which is the only way for the rule of law to be established.

The presidency is now a diminished institution. This is a welcome thing because the root of our patronage politics has been the omnipotent presidency, watered by a budget that should be cut in half or fixed at the level of revenues. Borrowing from our grandchildren by running deficits is an illicit license. Macapagal's will not be an easy tenure, having succeeded to it without the mandate of election. Thus the emphasis she placed on "healing."

Justice may have been saved this time by the direct democracy of people power, but it is a repetition of history to which we are hopefully not condemned. The people's heroism ought to be reserved for the greatest of tyrannies. At some point, institutions have to do the work. Budgets cannot be passed at demonstrations, nor policy made by a mob, unless one is at the head of it.

Rare moments in history are those, when from its peaks, one can see the shining city of the future, rising from the penumbra of the past. If people power offers hope, I think I found it in the multitude of young people who were holding an all-night rave party at Edsa before the mass defections ended Erap. In that darkling midnight before the dawn, the iridescent lights of their cell phones revealed bright eyes of that empowered vigilance with which to secure their own liberty.

Preoccupation with the impeachment trial

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

THANKS to the extensive coverage of the proceedings, words and phrases that are distinct to the legal profession (or as Sen. Rodolfo Biazon calls it, legal gobbledygook) have been added to everyday conversation.

The phrases "Your Honor," "objection" and "immaterial and irrelevant" are now common fare for many. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, those oft repeated phrases are used to make fun of others or add color to an otherwise boring conversation.

A watch-your-car boy once addressed me as "Your Honor" when he approached me after I parked my car near a building. An elevator boy remarked "objection" when a passenger asked to be left off a floor that was not part of the elevator's route. In the course of a discussion on certain administrative matters, a colleague remarked "immaterial and irrelevant" when somebody suggested a certain course of action.

A by-product of the impeachment trial is the renewed interest in the legal profession, similar to what happened in the Unites States when several television networks covered live the OJ Simpson trial. The impressive performances of prosecution lawyer Joker Arroyo and defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza have inspired many youngsters to explore the idea of going to law school.

If the enrolment of private law schools increases next semester (many of which are facing closure because of low enrolment), credit should be given to the impeachment trial and the radio and television networks that made the event a national audience phenomenon.

Readers' reaction

The prevailing mood in the country has not been lost on many of the readers of the Inquirer. Almost six out of every 10 letters or e-mail I received during the past weeks relate to comments or observations about the trial.

What strikes me as surprising about these letters is that many of them are written in Filipino, not the Taglish type that is the bane of grammar teachers, and in long hand at that. The letter writers went to great lengths to express their thoughts in a language they are most familiar with.

Reading through the letters, one gets the impression of somebody writing from the heart. No frills, no sugar-coated words. Just plain and conversational language meant to convey exactly how the writer feels about the issue.

I have no intention to taking up the letters that are complementary to the manner by which the Inquirer has covered and reported the events at the trial. Some readers might object to the reproduction of those letters for being "self-serving" and "immaterial." If asked to rule on that objection, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. would probably say "sustained as to the first objection and overruled as to the second."

The complaints against the newspaper's coverage of the trial may be summarized in one word: anti-Erap. That the Inquirer, consistent with its critical stance on the President from the time he assumed the presidency, plays up the news that put the President in a bad light and buries those that are favorable to him.

One reader pointed to the front-page treatment given to Clarissa Ocampo, Jose Luis Yulo and Edgardo Espiritu as proof of the newspaper's bias. She complained that Acting Press Secretary Mike Toledo and Ambassador Ernesto Maceda, spokesperson of the President on the impeachment trial, had not been accorded similar treatment.

And that whenever the President's photos appeared at the front page, it was his not-so-good side that is featured. Either he looks worried or depressed, or he is engaged in an act that projected his "unpresidential" mannerisms.

I brought the complaints to the attention of the editor in chief. The concerns raised were similar to those earlier made in regard to the alleged anti-Estrada slant of its news reports and columns.

In reply to the complaints, the editor in chief reiterated her earlier comment that the newspaper publishes the news and photos about the trial as they happen without regard to the personalities involved. She realizes that the Inquirer cannot satisfy everybody in the presentation of the news and photos.

Some may not like what comes out of the newspaper, but she believes the majority of the readers are in favor of the way it reports the news as shown by the high newspaper sales.

* * *

At this juncture, I would like to respond to the letters I received asking that I refrain from writing a day-to-day analysis for the newspaper of the impeachment trial.

The analysis, which comes out with the news about the developments in the trial, was conceived for the purpose of explaining to the readers in simple and easy-to-understand language the highlights of the day's trial.

In anticipation of the legal phrases and arguments that will fly around during the trial (which has been proven correct), the Inquirer felt a commentary on why a witness is being presented, or why certain actions are being made, or what direction the trial is going to, is needed to enable the readers to intelligently follow the proceedings.

The "anti-analysis" readers believe the commentary should be written by somebody who is not connected, directly or indirectly, with the Inquirer. Because I am part of the staff, they claim my appreciation and evaluation of the events in the trial will be influenced by the anti-Estrada stance that the newspaper is known for.

The readers concerned are entitled to their opinion on how or who should prepare the analysis. The criticism did not surprise me. I expected it. It's a fact of life in the newspaper world that not all the readers will be satisfied whenever anything is written about any subject. Some will like it, others will not.

Perhaps, the only thing that will not invite contrary comments or controversy will be the name of the newspaper and the issue date. All others, including advertisements, are susceptible to doubts or questioning.

Suffice it to say that I have written the analysis in the manner that I saw fit based on my judgment. The articles will show that when the prosecution committed mistakes. I highlighted them. In the same breath, when the defense appeared to be tentative or unsure of its moves, I pointed them out.

It is inevitable that I give my comments on some of the acts of the lawyers or senator-judges, otherwise the analysis will simply repeat whatever has been reported in the news. In other words, it should be a real analysis, not just a hodgepodge of observations.

In some way I am thankful the impeachment trial is on recess. It is no joke evaluating an event that has just happened with the editor reminding you that you have to make the analysis concise, but comprehensive, or easy to read but not condescending. And that it has to be finished, regardless of the time the trial ends, before the deadline to put the newspaper to bed comes.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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'Mabuhay tayong lahat!'

I WOULD like to thank the 11 senators who voted against the opening of the second envelope for hastening the downfall of the Erap administration. Miracles do come in mysterious ways and the attempt to prevent crucial evidence from being brought out during the impeachment trial was one of them. The action of the 11 senators had inadvertently paved the way for the truth to come out finally.

Being an overseas Filipino worker, I have followed with fervor the political and economic developments in our country. I was rendered speechless by the shameless display of partisan voting on the controversial second envelope and felt so utterly defeated. When the value of the peso fell to 55 to the dollar, I should have had cause for joy being a dollar-earner, but I could not, in conscience, feel glad knowing that the rest of my *kababayan* would have less food on their tables. Thankfully, the sentiments of the truly enlightened Filipino people could no longer be contained, which resulted in massive protests all over the country. We have again shown to the world that democracy truly resides in the soul of our people and its success is only measured by the amount of vigilance we are willing to give.

I would like to say how proud I am of being a Filipino today more than ever. My colleagues from other countries are congratulating the Filipinos in our company for this wonderful turn of events, considering that some of them come from countries that continue to be ruled by tyrants. We have achieved another milestone and I hope that, this time, we have learned our lesson so well that no future leader who does not pass the moral and intellectual requirements of the office he is aspiring for shall ever be put again in power.

To all my *kababayan, mabuhay tayong lahat*!—**BUDDY MORENO, Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Edsa 3 must never be necessary

FOR THE LAST three days, I've been glued to the television set. I really wanted to catch up with the updates on what was happening in Edsa and Malacañang. I closely followed every news tidbit, as a matter of fact, even from the start of the impeachment trial. This week, despite the tremendous load of reading (I had been waiting for the coming mid-term exams), I made sure that I knew the latest events in Metro Manila, particularly Edsa. So my attention was practically torn between my books and TV.

Since Friday and Saturday, I have been overwhelmed by the whirlwind of events that surprisingly took place. Last night as I was watching the TV, I wished I was part of that crowd that courageously fought for truth, justice and national renewal. To join them in a fashion, I was up till dawn of Jan. 20.

I hope there will be no longer an Edsa 3. We ought to be grateful for the Divine intervention that made it all bloodless and that kept our Filipino brothers and sisters who clamored for the ouster of Estrada unscathed.

God has been good to our country. He showed it today by giving us another chance. Today is a brand-new day for all of us Filipinos. It's okay to have made wrong choices some time in our lives. I know it's time now that we learn our lesson. Finally, let the change begin in ourselves. And let justice be done.—**HAZEL JOY G. CAMPOSANO, College of Law, University of San Carlos, Cebu City**

Not vindictiveness but justice

MAY I comment on Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes' statement that we should not be vindictive with regard to Joseph Estrada.

The issue, I think, is justice. The people's court has pronounced Mr. Estrada guilty of the impeachment charges. If there's no closure, and justice is again trivialized, as in the case of Marcos, then we shall just be repeating history and we shall never be free of the shackles of our past.

Therefore, I think we should not cloud the issue by reducing matters to whether we are vindictive or not. After his removal from office, I believe the process must begin to determine whether Mr. Estrada has committed crimes against the people including but not limited to the charges brought up during the impeachment trial.

If Mr. Estrada is found not to have any criminal liability during this criminal trial, then he should be left alone. If he is found guilty of criminal liability, then justice should be rendered.

I believe a person should accept the consequences of his actions and decisions. If we let people get away with it, we do not deserve the democracy we somehow have and it will soon be lost forever. I think we keep sending the wrong message, and we shall be stuck where we are.—**ROBERT CAMBIL, 97 Carisbrooke Sq, Scarborough, Ontario M1B 4M3, Canada**

Gonzales just as guilty as his undersecretaries

IS the Office of the Ombudsman babying Education Secretary Andrew Gonzalez?

Teachers, education workers and students certainly think so after Ombudsman Aniano Desierto suspended two undersecretaries but not the department chief who also directly benefited from the luxury vehicle issue. We do not see that justice is being served in this case when only Undersecretaries Antonio Valdez and Bartolome Carale are being punished while Gonzales, the one who is being driven around in the most expensive among the vehicles illegally purchased, is getting away scot-free.

Basic principles such as command responsibility and a government official's direct culpability for his actions are being ignored in the prosecution of this case. Desierto should remember how rapidly Gonzalez defended the purchase and his continued use of his Ford Expedition, which was bought with deceitfully sourced funds. If that is not a clear indication of his guilt, we do not know what is.

Now that President Estrada's kleptocracy and sickening immorality are being bared, the people have become more aware about how criminally inclined this regime really is, even those who hide behind religious affiliations.

We have always demanded absolute moral fortitude among our government officials since we, the people, deserve no less. If they cannot help themselves from benefiting from their positions, they have no right to be in their positions. And if they have erred, regardless of who they seem to be—popularly elected presidents or religious brothers serving as department secretaries—they should be punished.—**CAROL J. ALMEDA, president, Alliance of Concerned Teachers-Philippines, Maginoo Street, Barangay Central, QC**

Wishing he was here

I MISSED the revolution by a day. I left Manila on Jan. 15 with a heavy heart, because I have to resume my graduate studies at the Rutgers University in New Jersey. I knew in my bones that something would happen. Upon reaching my sister's house in Los Angeles, I slept the whole day and woke up to the sound of my cellular phone ringing. There was a text message from home. One of my friends said that Sen. Aquilino Pimentel had resigned and the prosecutors walked out of the impeachment proceedings. I rushed to my computer and logged online to the INQUIRER. There it was, the news that Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Francisco Tatad had reprised their much-despised role during the dark days of the Marcos dictatorship. The dogs are back with their old tricks.

I was so upset I could not eat. And then I read on and saw the reports of thousands of people massing on Edsa, and felt I was right all along—that the Filipino people would not take stupidity and gangsterism sitting down, that there is still bravery and integrity beneath our bonhomie and seeming lightheartedness about everything that is going on.

You just don't know how much I envy all of you, waging a revolution on the very streets where we

LETTERS

kicked the butt of a dictator 15 years ago. I have a return ticket and I keep on looking at it all the time. One day my friends might just find me there, smiling beneath the brilliant sun, along with a million others, proving that we might be a crazy people, but no, we could never be bought.—**DANTON REMOTO, Department of English, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 08901 USA**

Motions for consideration

IN THE LIGHT of recent developments in the aborted impeachment trial, I would like to file my motions on the following points:

- I move that the Senate session hall be transformed to a ballroom to accommodate Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta's unabashed display of her dancing prowess as viewed by the public.
- I move that Sen. Francisco Tatad be expelled unconditionally from the Opus Dei in line with his un-Christian interpretation of moral governance.
- I move that Sen. Ramon Revilla undergo a diagnostic test for schizophrenia for having split decisions on the same issue.
- I move that Sen. Nikki Coseteng refrain from wearing outfits in different colors as she is already showing her true color.
- I move that Sen. Robert Jaworski be permanently barred from the basketball court for having no balls in the first place.
- I move that Sen. John Osmeña be assigned his own dining area at the Senate with his declaration that his fellow senator-judges are already polarized.
- I move that Sen. Johnny Enrile be subjected to a revolt by the people due to his very revolting demeanor since the start of the trial.
- I move that Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago amend her name to Miriam Fordefense-Santiago in line with her preoccupation with the President's acquittal.
- I move that Sen. Blas Ople who was perceived to have taken the oath of *omerta* (silence) keep his silence forever after that brief "No" vote.
- I move that Sen. Gringo Honasan be recalled to active duty in Mindanao where his ability for demolition jobs can be put to greater use.
- Finally, I move that Sen. Tito Sotto be awarded a certificate of non-distinction for his failure to interpret and distinguish universal hand signs.—**MARICHU C. VELASCO, 15 Apo St., Hacienda Heights Village, Marikina City**

Regretting the kind of senators we chose

THEY had the numbers. And it looked like they came prepared to defend their beleaguered President, at any cost! The rotten, the stupid and the narrow-minded in the Senate prevailed over the more profound and the saner ones!

Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta was simply disappointing. Her conduct was, as they say. very unbecoming of a senator. She was booing, shouting and displaying the antics of a street bully. It was an effort to remind myself she was a sister of Ninoy! Then there was Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, one of the major players of the Edsa Revolution. How times have changed. There seemed to be no traces anymore of what Edsa had been once. Has Sen. Gringo Honasan ceased to be the soldier of principle he was? Then, what are Senators Robert Jaworski, Tito Sotto, Ramon Revilla, doing in the Philippine Senate? Those 11 senators have done irreparable damage to the Senate. They have shown us, with their own hands, a painful lesson in mocking what we all know of truth and justice.

Sen. Jun Magsaysay is right. We have run out of Claro Rectos, Ninoy Aquinos, Gerry Roxases and Jovito Salongas. And we have so much of the Miriams, of the Johnnys (except Flavier, the small man with a big heart for the Filipinos) and the rest of the Dirty Eleven. How did they become senators of the republic?—**ALVIN A. CALAYAG, managing editor, Frontpage, 2/F Allied Bank Bldg., Fairview Avenue, QC**

Traffic headache in Commonwealth-Litex area

IF you live in Fairview or Novaliches, Quezon City, one of the routes to Makati takes you through the busy Commonwealth Avenue. This major thoroughfare stretches from Fairview to the Elliptical Road. I now live in Taytay but I used to live with my parents at BF Homes, Quezon City. Since 1997, the Commonwealth-Litex area has become a virtual marketplace.

The Commonwealth-Litex area is the most congested zone in Quezon City. Why? Because market vendors have used the sidewalks and parts of the road, jeepneys and buses have their respective terminals also in the same area and the volume of traffic passing through this avenue is so large that the traffic is a daily headache.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the local police seem to have no short-term or long-term solutions for this. There seems to be no plan to provide a market for vendors and put up proper terminals. Despite the road-widening projects along the Don Antonio stretch and at the intersection leading to the Batasang Pambansa, drivers and commuters will live more years of their lives in traffic, in a virtual parking lot. MMDA traffic officers can only watch in despair.

I hope that the city government will do something to solve this traffic problem. There will be more cars, more vendors, larger jeepney and bus terminals in the years to come. This place is a growing time bomb if they don't start getting their act together.—**NOEL CARPIO, Taytay, Rizal**

No Aloha to Erap

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—When visitors arrive in Hawaii, they are greeted with the standard "Aloha" welcome, usually with a lei and a friendly kiss or a hug. Sometimes, the greeting "E Komo Mai," which also means "welcome" is used. You are gently reminded that you have arrived in a very hospitable and gentle place.

But Aloha is not for everyone. Certainly not for the shameless and discredited Erap, who must now scramble for a place of refuge after plundering the poor and wrecking the country he had sworn to uphold when he became President. I understand that Honolulu is one of the cities (some of the others being mentioned are San Francisco and Los Angeles) being considered as an option for his asylum. Hello!

Here we go again! Or should that be, not ever again!? The script should run out at this point. End game, *Pare*. No escape in some ready airplane (owned by your favorite crony Lucio Tan) that will fly over the Pacific. Not even on a slow boat to Honolulu harbor. Hawaii is a logical stopping point from our side of the earth. But please, there's been too many rascals in paradise. It's not good for the environment. Politically and otherwise.

The last one, Marcos who was Erap's patron, was a putrid element which not only divided and polluted the Filipino community but also spread the stench of corruption in the island state as he continued to reclaim his presidency and destabilize the government that took over the mess he left behind. Erap and his handlers should understand that Hawaii is not the backyard where he can wallow in the cesspool of his longstanding corruption. This is not a garbage dump. Among the 50 states of the union, Hawaii has the highest quality of life index. Estrada around? The disgraced mafiosi ex-president thug? And his goons? And his loot? Or his mistresses—not just one but several of them? Is this going to be the place of assignation? Worse, the playing field of his continuing corruption?

And yet, even as I say this, I realize that Hawaii, being the Aloha State, has over time welcomed unabashedly dictators, renegades, grafters, crooks like Erap, and other undesirable elements fleeing their native countries. All because of a misplaced application of the Aloha spirit. When Marcos was dumped here unceremoniously by the US military, there was no outcry from leadership circles in the state. In fact, he was welcomed by his good friend, Gov. George Ariyoshi, and his wife Jean, whom Imelda was to befriend. Some leaders went so far as to say that Hawaii has had a "tradition" of providing refuge to deposed leaders of other countries.

Like every concept, no matter how well-meaning and positive, Aloha has been and can be used perversely. It has been corrupted to accommodate unwelcome characters. No wonder there's also a dark side to paradise that taint the natural beauty of these islands.

The first corrupt right-wing ex-leader who was given refuge in Honolulu was Syngman Rhee, who was ousted as South Korea's president in the 1950s. But to his credit, he was a silent refugee and died in relative obscurity on a hillside hospital for the aged. He never disrupted the Korean or larger Hawaii community.

The next rascal in paradise was Lon Nol, the military strongman of Cambodia who was overthrown by the equally murderous Khmer Rouge in the mid-1970s. He also lived in relative seclusion on the island of Oahu, but later moved to the US mainland to join members of his family. He died somewhere in southern California, again without nobody really noticing.

When Saigon fell in 1975, deposed strongman-butcher Nguyen Cao Ky was seen around Honolulu, mucking around trying to organize the boat people and other right-wing Vietnamese renegades and castaways. Eventually, he gravitated to Louisiana where he ran a shrimp business with his cohorts. He's never been heard from and chances are he is living off his loot in quiet retirement.

And then came Marcos after People Power 1 ousted him that fateful night in February 1986. I was awakened by the news that he and his gang of 89 had landed on Hickam Air Base with the Ariyoshis waiting with their leis, kisses and all. The Filipino community has never been the same since.

I remember getting resigned to the thought: the revolution must go on. It would take another 3 years before things could stabilize a bit, mainly through Marcos' ignominious demise and the comic relief that followed Marcos necropolitics both in Hawaii and the Philippines.

Newly installed President George W. Bush has his hands full already with this first foreign policy crisis of his administration involving the US former colony in Asia. Even without the Subic and Clark military bases in the Philippines, it's not as though the United States is out of Philippine affairs. It has never been and will not let go. At this writing, I'm sure the State Department has already been instructed by the administration to consider a US asylum for Estrada. And Hawaii, being located where it is, and having had this "tradition" of being a refuge for rascal and renegade former chiefs of state (it doesn't matter how rotten they are, especially as they affect US interests one way or the other), is considering an Erap asylum here as an option. "God forbid," exclaimed one anti-martial law leader in the past, about to faint.

Indeed, God forbid that he should ever set foot here and rescript the Marcos nightmare all over again. He should go to Devil's Island maybe to live out his days in atonement. But not Hawaii, unless the state is prepared to risk a major political disaster especially in light of the upcoming annual meeting in Honolulu in May of the Asian Development Bank. Erap is not worth it. But then, the United States never learns its lessons, does it?

People Power is a special gift and talent of the Filipino people and it is contagious. We have lots of it among Filipinos overseas, too. Let that be known upfront. Filipinos everywhere are very determined when it comes to People Power. Why not? That has been our salvation in times of extreme crisis, not the formal political system with its genetic *balimbings* and scums of the earth, who should also be equally chastised. None of this silly forgiveness politics which usually happens in transition governments.

I hope Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is up to it. She remains to be tested.

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The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

INAUGURAL MOTORCADE

Protesters hurl insults, egg at Bush

WASHINGTON—George W. Bush's motorcade lurched through the largest inaugural protests since Richard Nixon's era, enduring thousands of protesters who hurled insults at the newly installed president. Some threw bottles, tomatoes and an egg and one demonstrator burned an American flag atop a lamppost.

Protesters clashed briefly Saturday with police clad in riot gear at a few flash points while Bush remained inside his armored stretch car for most of the parade up a soggy, cold Pennsylvania Avenue.

Police ordered the motorcade to slow in anticipation of some protests—at one point stopping it for five minutes—and then sped it through others.

A couple of protesters threw bottles and tomatoes before the presidential limousine arrived, and one hurled an egg that landed near the motorcade, the Secret Service said.

But the protesters managed little else to interrupt the festivities in the face of a massive show of 7,000 police officers.

As the day grew darker and colder, authorities had arrested only six people and activists began to disperse, said Terrance W. Gainer, executive assistant chief of police. One of them was charged with assault with a deadly weapon after slashing tires and trying to assault an officer, Gainer said.

"Hail to the Thief," read one sign along the parade route questioning the legitimacy of Bush's election win in Florida. Other protesters sported buttons declaring, "illegitimate Son of a Bush."

"If he had won clearly, I wouldn't have troubled to come here," said Mack Wilder, a construction worker from Greensboro, North Carolina, who joined over 100 others from the state for a five-hour bus journey through fog and rain.

Some said the deeply conservative tinge of Bush's Cabinet drove them into the streets. "By having people like (John) Ashcroft nominated, he is definitely not being a healer, which is what he promised to be," said Barbara Katz.

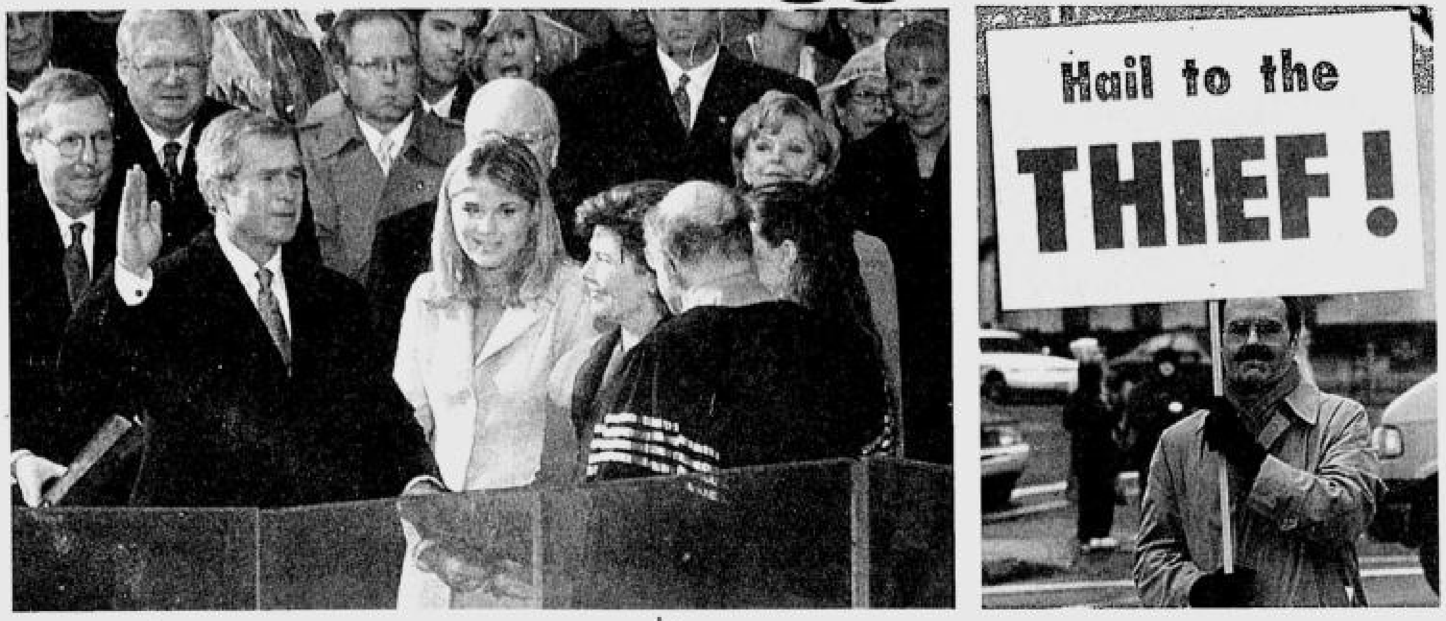
There were also inaugural day protests around the country. Some of the largest were in California, where demonstrators outside the Capitol sang "George Bush Ain't My President." Protesters in Seattle gathered around a flower-covered cardboard coffin labeled "Ballot Box." There were also demonstrations in Florida, Massachusetts, Oregon, and Vermont.

Bush remained in his limousine for most of the traditional parade route up Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House.

The new president finally exited for a brief walk only after he reached a secure zone near the White House filled with inauguration ticketholders and no protesters.

The protests were the largest since those during Nixon's 1973 inauguration at the height of the Vietnam war. Those protests drew about 60,000; organizers of the Bush protests anticipated 20,000.

Though protesters had many disparate causes, most said they were motivated by the Florida election controversy.


Hail to the THIEF!

WITH his wife Laura and twin daughters as witnesses, George W. Bush takes the oath of office from chief Justice William Rehnquist (above) to become the 43rd president, Jan. 20. A protester (above, right) holds a "Hail to the Thief" placard, referring to the controversial Florida presidential election results, along the motorcade route. The protests were the largest since Nixon's 1973 inauguration at the height of the Vietnam War. AP/REUTERS

Bob Rogers, one of the organizers of the "Voter March," said the fact that Bush captured the White House even though Al Gore won the popular vote by 500,000 guaranteed busloads of demonstrators.

"These are moderate, working people, motivated by anger, embarrassment, that kind of sentiment," he said. "They're wondering, 'We put a man on the moon, why can't we count the vote?'"

On the Capitol steps where he was sworn in, Bush exchanged smiles and pleasantries with Al Gore—a civility that at times extended into the streets. Pro- and anti-Bush protesters joked with each other, and jostled each other on crowded subway trains. *AP*

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Israel accepts Palestinian proposals

JERUSALEM—Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak on Saturday accepted Palestinian proposals for marathon peace negotiations in Egypt—a dramatic eleventh-hour effort with Israel's elections less than three weeks away and the hawkish opposition far ahead in the polls.

Meeting late Saturday, Barak's "Peace Cabinet" agreed to attend up to 10 days of intensive talks that are due to start late Sunday at the Red Sea resort of Taba, government officials said.

Palestinians welcomed the Israeli decision, saying they were determined to explore all the possibilities for reaching an agreement.

"We hope the Israeli side will be serious in these negotiations. On our side, we are serious," said Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat. "I don't want to raise the expectations, but we'll exert every effort to reach an agreement."

The Israeli team will be headed by Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami and will include Justice Minister Yossi Beilin, an architect of interim Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements, and Cabinet Minister Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, who like Barak is a former military chief.

Yossi Sarid, the leader of the dovish Meretz party, will be joining the talks from time to time. Barak and elder statesman Shimon Peres will be "guiding" the negotiations but will not be joining at the initial stage.

The presence of Beilin could be especially significant because he brings to the table personal credibility with the Palestinians and a deep commitment to the peace process—after several years of being shut out of negotiations.

"This is an effort to reach a framework agreement," Beilin said on Israel television. "The sides have agreed on parameters for peace, so in my opinion there's no need for much discussion. And as long as negotiations are possible, they should be conducted."

On the Palestinian side, the team will be headed by parliament speaker Ahmed Qureia and will include Erekat, Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo, senior peace negotiator Nabil Shaath and others. Arafat, like Barak, will be absent at the initial stage. *AP*

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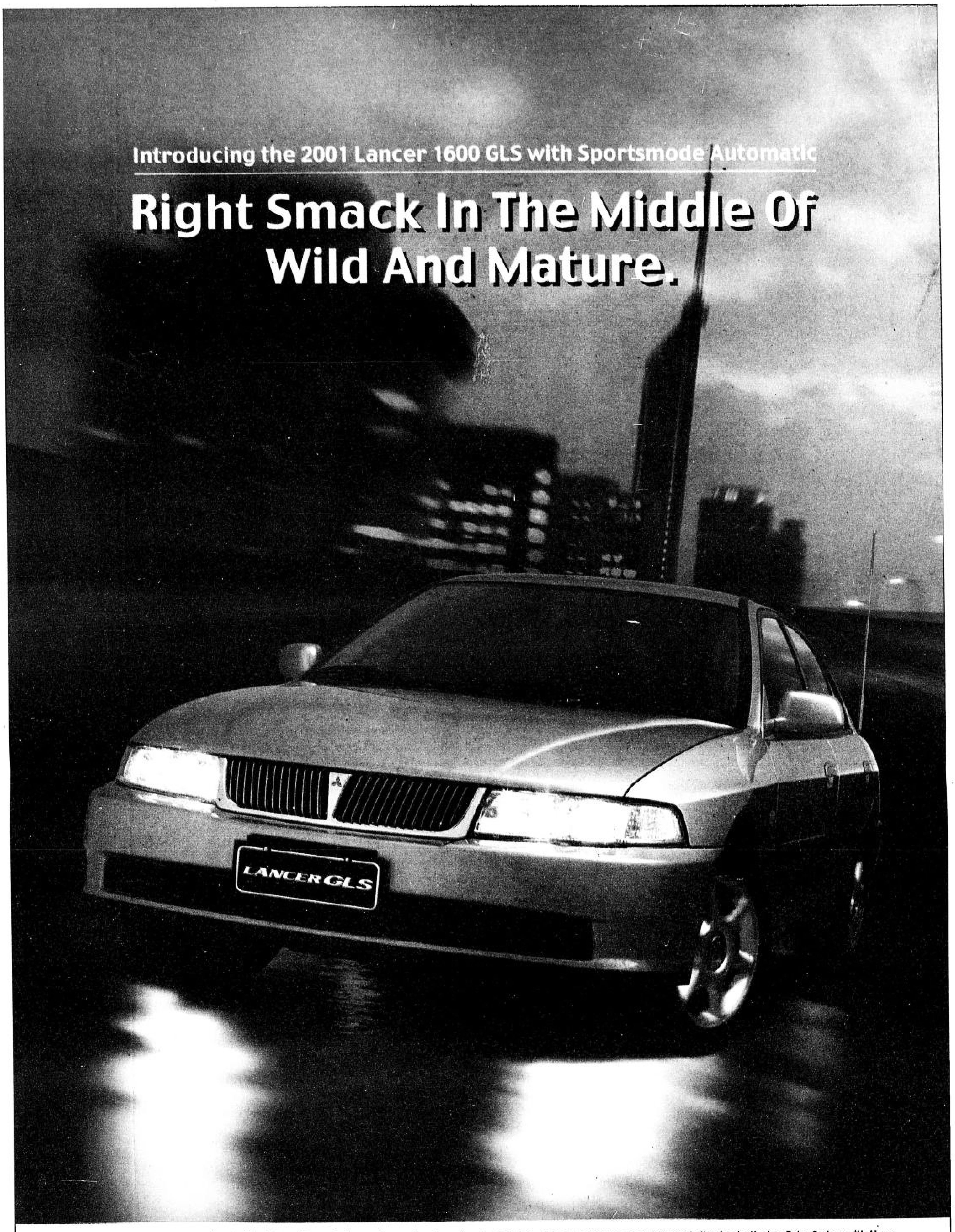

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Thai graft probe delays release of election results

BANGKOK—Thai election authorities Sunday grilled dozens more candidates suspected of cheating in the Jan. 6 national polls, forcing the release of official results to be postponed yet again.

Unofficial tallies indicate the Thai Rak Thai party led by Thaksin Shinawatra scored a runaway victory in the national elections, capturing an unprecedented simple majority in the 500-seat House of Representatives.

But widespread allegations of vote-buying and ballot box tampering have caused extensive delays in the ballot-counting process as officials labor to investigate the charges.

About 90 candidates have now been summoned for questioning by the EC, and more than a dozen reportedly face disqualification after being found guilty of cheating.

The rest may be given a "yellow card" warning that will entitle them to run in re-elections scheduled to be held in affected constituencies on Jan. 29.

EC commissioner Yuwarut Gamolvej told reporters Sunday after a day spent questioning the latest crop of suspect poll winners that all the "red card" disqualifications would be handed out Monday, and the warnings on Tuesday.

Official results would be released all together on Wednesday, instead of being unveiled progressively from Sunday as had been planned earlier, he said.

Heartened by Interior Ministry figures that indicate Thai Rak Thai has won 258 seats in the lower house, Thaksin has gone about the business of forming a coalition and releasing policies.

But the Bangkok Post said Sunday that the fledgling party's majority could be whittled away by the disqualifications, forcing it to take on an extra coalition partner to ensure stability in parliament.

Thaksin is aiming for a 320-seat coalition, with the New Aspiration Party considered a likely first choice as its partner in government.

However, both parties have been badly hit by the EC's investigations and another smaller party may be brought into the ruling alliance as a result, the daily said. *AFP*

BLANKETED IN SNOW REUTERS

Old houses in Shirakawago village in central Japan are covered in deep snow Jan. 20 as winter temperatures continue to dip. The village has been selected as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or Unesco.

Wahid faces corruption probers soon

JAKARTA—After weeks of refusing to cooperate, Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid is ready to appear before a parliamentary panel investigating two corruption scams this week, his spokesperson said Sunday.

Until now Wahid has ignored summonses to testify and has rejected efforts by lawmakers to quiz him as unconstitutional and outrageous.

His stance has fueled calls for him to step down amid a growing conflict between the executive and the legislature.

"It should happen this week," spokesperson Wimar Witoelar said of the proposed meeting. "The president is making himself fully available."

However, Witoelar said the president would be happy to meet the panel anywhere but the parliament building. He did not elaborate.

The first scandal, dubbed Buloggate by local media, centers on the theft of $4 million from Bulog, the state logistics agency.

The second concerns a $2 million personal donation from Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, which lawmakers say the president failed to fully disclose. Wahid has denied wrongdoing.

Lawmakers, however, have heard testimony from former government officials who said Wahid ordered the transfer of the cash from Bulog.

The panel is scheduled to submit to parliament its report on the scandals at the end of January.

Demonstrators gathered at the legislature on three consecutive days last week calling on Wahid to resign. *AP*

Bus explosion kills 3, hurts 40 in Kashmir

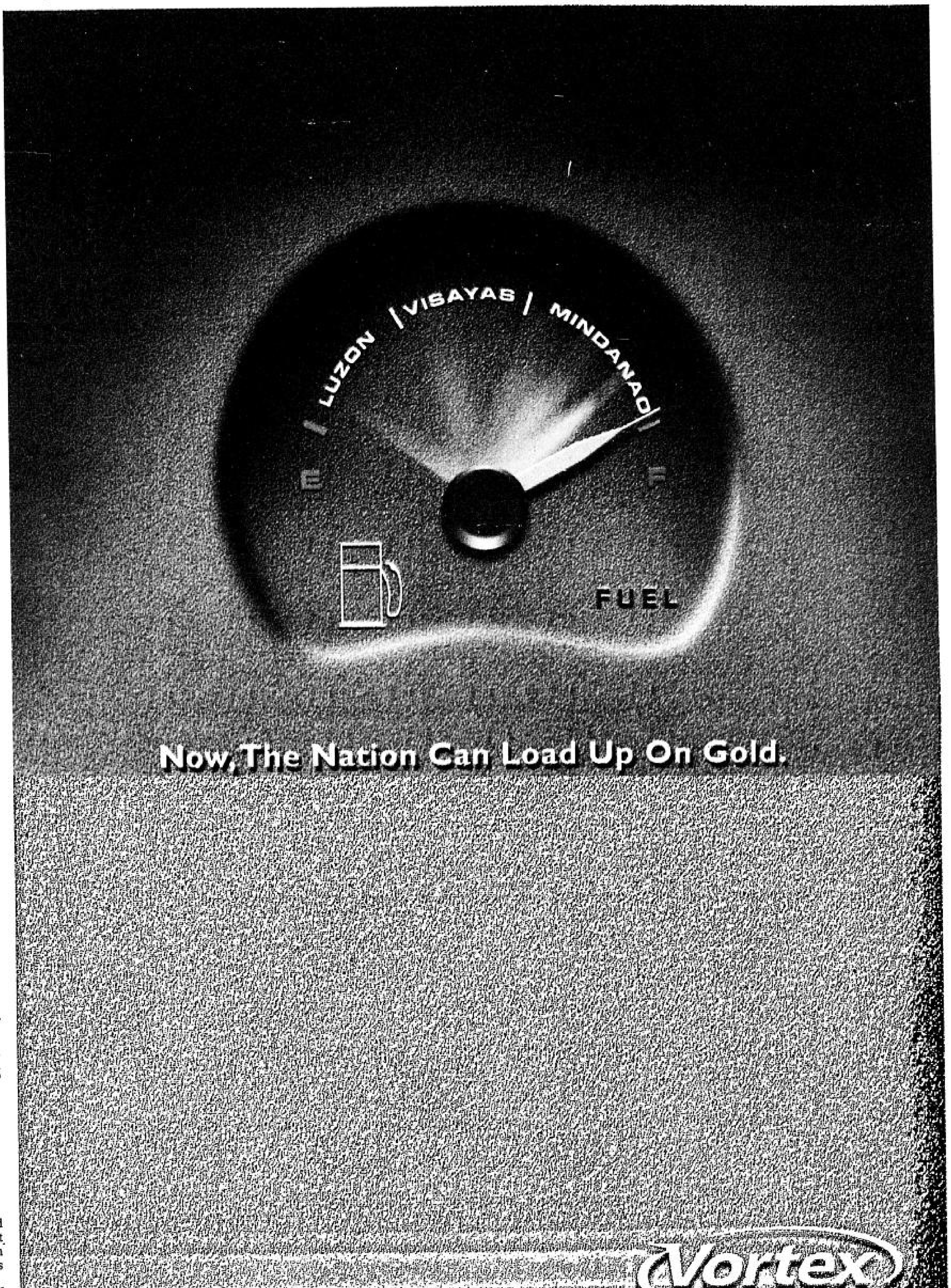
PATTAN, India—Three civilians were killed and 40 passengers injured when a bomb went off on a government bus traveling from Baramulla to Srinagar on Sunday, authorities said.

The bomb went off about 40 km north of Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu-Kashmir state, where Islamic militants have been waging a war of independence since 1989.

At least 30 people and 10 Indian Army soldiers were injured in the blast, some of whom were in critical condition.

Authorities said they hadn't determined whether the bomb was planted on the bus or if a suicide bomber had been on the vehicle.

The blast comes amid renewed efforts by India and Pakistan to resolve the situation in the disputed territory, which is claimed by both South Asian neighbors. A two-month ceasefire declared by India against the Islamic guerrillas is due to end on Jan. 26. *AP*



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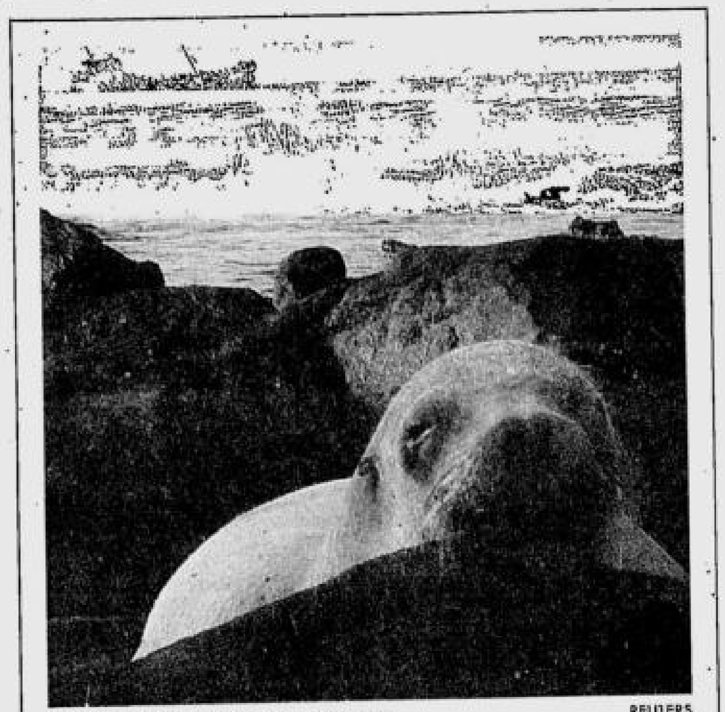

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THREATENED MARINE LIFE

A seal rests on the rocks as the ship "Jessica," carrying 160,000 gallons of diesel fuel and about 60,000 gallons of other liquids, ran aground 800 meters from the Galapagos' main port on San Cristobal Island, Jan. 20. The Galapagos, located 1,000 km from the Ecuadoran coast, were visited by British naturalist Charles Darwin in 1835.

Nokor media belatedly report Kim Jong-il's visit to China

SEOUL—Most countries announce their leader's itinerary for overseas trips, and their media cover every move. But not North Korea—its official media belatedly reported on leader Kim Jong-il's visit to China over the weekend as he wrapped up a weeklong stay.

Accompanied by military and ruling Worker's Party officials, Kim Jong-il paid an unofficial visit to China on Jan. 15-20 at the invitation of Chinese President Jiang Zemin, said the Korean Central News Agency, the North's overseas news outlet, late Saturday.

Earlier Saturday, China's Foreign Ministry announced Kim Jong-il praised China's free-market reforms after getting a firsthand look. It was the first official acknowledgment that Kim had been there, although foreign diplomats and reporters had already known about the visit.

The Chinese government said both sides agreed on the timing of the public announcement of the visit, but did not explain the reason behind the secrecy. It also said that Kim Jong-il had left China Saturday, but did not say where he went. Kim normally travels on his own train.

Many South Korean experts believe North Korea keeps its leader's overseas travels a secret because of concerns over security and a possible power vacuum in the poor communist nation.

A list of officials who accompanied Kim Jong-il released by KCNA did not include Jo Myong-rok, the North's No.2 man and Kim's close aide, meaning he might have been taking charge in North Korea during Kim's absence. Jo Myong-rok visited Washington in October to discuss improving ties.

Kim's itinerary—including tours of Shanghai's Stock Exchange, a steel mill, a high-tech park and factories partially owned by foreign companies—raised speculation that he was studying communist ally China's transformation to apply its lessons to his collapsed Stalinist economy.

At a meeting between Jiang and Kim, the two leaders agreed "to make greater efforts to consolidate and develop the traditional friendship and push the bilateral friendly and cooperative relations up to a higher level," the North Korean state media said. *AFP*

CHINESE President Jiang Zemin (left) poses with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in Beijing, Jan. 20 before Kim returned to North Korea after an unofficial visit starting Jan. 15. This was the second visit of the North Korean leader to China.

REUTERS

India deploys full military forces for Republic Day rites

NEW DELHI—Security forces have been placed on alert across India ahead of Republic Day on Jan. 26, which is being held against a backdrop of mounting violence and daring raids by Kashmir's Islamic militants.

Algerian President Abelaziz Bouteflika will be the guest of honor during the parade in New Delhi on Friday when India marks its transition to a republic in 1950, three years after it gained freedom from British colonial rule.

Republic Day celebrations are held in each of India's 27 states every year and in New Delhi the main event comprises a colorful parade, showcasing the country's military might and cultural diversity.

The Delhi police department said it was pulling out all the stops and deploying its entire 70,000-strong force during the celebrations, which will be attended by Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and President K.R. Narayanan.

Armed military commandos for the first time will escort the marching contingents of soldiers and schoolchildren, while sharpshooters will man skyscrapers across the five-kilometer route of Friday's show.

"We will sweep the grounds by the hour for explosives and the air force will turn New Delhi into a no-fly-zone," a defense ministry official said, adding that air defense radars stringing the city would be activated on Friday.

Delhi Police Commissioner Ajai Raj Sharma said he had asked for 4,000 army reinforcements and added that 200 hand-picked detectives were currently training with the elite "Black Cat" commandos.

"As it is, we have to be very vigilant in the present scenario. We are making every possible effort to see that nothing untoward happens during this month," Sharma said of the mammoth security preparations already underway.

Muslim guerrillas stormed one of New Delhi's most guarded buildings—the Red Fort—on Dec. 22, killing three people and deeply embarrassing the army which guards the Mughal-built monument.

A six-member suicide squad of the Pakistan-based Lashker-e-Taiba Islamic separatist group on January 16 attacked Srinagar city airport in one of the most audacious raids since the launch of the anti-Indian rebellion in Kashmir 12 years ago.

Although the airport storming ended with the death of all six rebels, security forces across India went on high alert the next day amid worries of another strike before or during Republic Day. *AFP*

Peru police arrest daughter, brother of former spy boss

LIMA—Peruvian police on Saturday arrested the eldest daughter, brother and sister-in-law of fugitive ex-secret police chief Vladimiro Montesinos on corruption charges, after earlier swooping to arrest former top generals.

Silvana Montesinos Becerra, the ex-police chief's daughter, her uncle Orlando Montesinos and his wife Estela Delgado were arrested on the orders of an investigating magistrate, police said.

The two women were taken to Santa Monica prison, a female penitentiary in Lima, while Orlando Montesinos was taken under tight security to another jail.

The charges relate to corruption of public officials and concealment of information to the detriment of the state and the justice system, officials said.

Vladimiro Montesinos was head of the intelligence service during Fujimori's 10 years as Peru's head of state. His wife, Maria Trinidad de Montesinos, is already under house arrest.

A videotape released in mid-September showed Montesinos apparently bribing an opposition lawmaker. The disclosure destabilized Fujimori's government, leading to the ex-president's ultimate resignation last November.

Earlier Saturday police had swooped to arrest four former Peruvian military leaders who are also linked both to Montesinos and to the ousted ex-president Fujimori.

Gen. Walter Chacon, who served as Army commander, chair of the joint chiefs of staff, and interior minister under Fujimori, was one of those arrested Saturday.

Another relative of Montesinos, brother-in-law Luis Cubas Portal, former commander of the Second Military Region in Lima, was arrested and charged Saturday with illegal enrichment, corruption and aiding in Montesinos' flight from Peru.

Chacon was detained by order of Judge Ricardo Nunez on charges of corrupting government employees and bribery, according to a statement from the judicial police.

Fujimori named Chacon Peru's interior minister in July 2000 and appointed him army commander in October, replacing General Jose Villanueva Ruesta. *AFP*

KABILA FUNERAL

Thousands pay homage to slain leader

KINSHASA—Thousands of people massed Saturday to pay homage to slain Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) president Laurent Kabila as a cortege five km long accompanied his body through the streets of the southeastern city of Lubumbashi.

The front lines in the war which has divided the giant central African country in half and dragged in five other African nations were quiet, meanwhile, a rebel leader said in the Rwandan capital Kigali.

Tension remained high in Kinshasa, and Belgium announced it was suspending flights to Kinshasa.

Kabila's remains will be buried in a Kinshasa mausoleum after a state funeral on Tuesday.

"Lots of people are mourning, wearing black," a reporter for the state ACP news agency said by telephone from Lubumbashi, the capital of Kabila's home province of Katanga. People were "withdrawn," he added.

Many others in the crowd wore wrap-arounds imprinted with the face of the stocky leader, a former Marxist rebel who seized power from longtime dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in July 1997.

The mood was angry at times, with some in the crowd accusing whites of being behind the assassination, witnesses said.

Kabila was shot at his Kinshasa residence by a bodyguard last Tuesday in circumstances that remain obscure, and flown to Harare for emergency medical treatment. The government announced his death on Thursday, saying he had died that morning, and appointed his 32-year-old son, Gen. Joseph Kabila, to run the country in the meantime.

He has met with ambassadors but otherwise kept a low profile, and the government—as usual—is issuing no statements on the war.

The presidents of Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe have all said their troops will remain here to back up the Congolese Armed Forces, but Rwanda and Uganda, which back rebel factions, are saying little as the situation in Kinshasa evolves.

In a brief televised statement late Saturday, the late president's Cabinet chief warned that the government would "not tolerate any public disturbances during the funeral."

Georges Buse said that if any trouble broke out the government "could be forced to use all means available," and called for calm during the event. *AFP*

Malaysian Chinese view Year of Snake as treacherous one

GEORGETOWN, Malaysia—Drums and cymbals crash ferociously as hundreds of spectators cheer a troupe of youngsters capering with a cloth dragon nine meters long. But the festivities mask a troubled time for Malaysia's ethnic Chinese minority.

"For the first time, I'm relieved that the Year of the Dragon is over," Tan Swee Chee, a second-generation Malaysian of Chinese origin, said at a street party ahead of Wednesday's Chinese New Year celebrations.

"It was supposed to bring us prosperity and happiness, but we seem to be worse off now."

The incoming Year of the Snake is traditionally viewed as a treacherous one, and this one is seen by many of Malaysia's Chinese as an omen to be especially wary of.

Relations with the Malay Muslim majority have grown tense in recent months, with many Chinese believing that Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is playing a dangerous race card.

Race is the backdrop to all politics in Malaysia. Every government since independence from Britain in 1957 has been led by the United Malays National Organization, or Umno, the exclusively Malay party now headed by Mahathir. Chinese and Indian-based parties have minor roles in government, but Umno takes the lead.

In 1969, ethnic riots fueled by Malay resentment of Chinese dominance in the economy left hundreds dead. Malaysia then instituted a brand of affirmative action that guarantees Malays cheap loans, places in universities and government jobs. Many Chinese dislike the policy, but grudgingly accept it as necessary to keep racial tensions from boiling over.

Georgetown is the capital of the northern island of Penang, Malaysia's only Chinese-majority state. Here the talk has lately turned resentful.

Mahathir, a Muslim, is pressuring the Chinese to accept racially integrated schools, putting hitherto separate Malay, Chinese and Indian schools under one roof. Chinese fear the teaching of their language and history will suffer.

"We don't want an angry confrontation with the Malays because we know that racial harmony is the key to our country's peace and success," said Khoo Huck Cheong, a tourist guide. "But nowadays we feel as though we're being treated as second-class citizens."

MAHATHIR

Chinese are not the only embattled minority. In Georgetown in March 1998, thousands of Malay and Indian Muslims brawled with Indian Hindus in a quarrel over Hindu temple bells that allegedly disrupted Muslim prayers. The temple was moved.

Chinese make up 30 percent of the population of 22 million, and their vote was crucial in returning Mahathir to power in a 1999 general election, when his Malay power base was split.

But since then, Malaysia's ruler of 19 years has repeatedly upset many Chinese with comments and decisions they feel are designed to regain Malay favor.

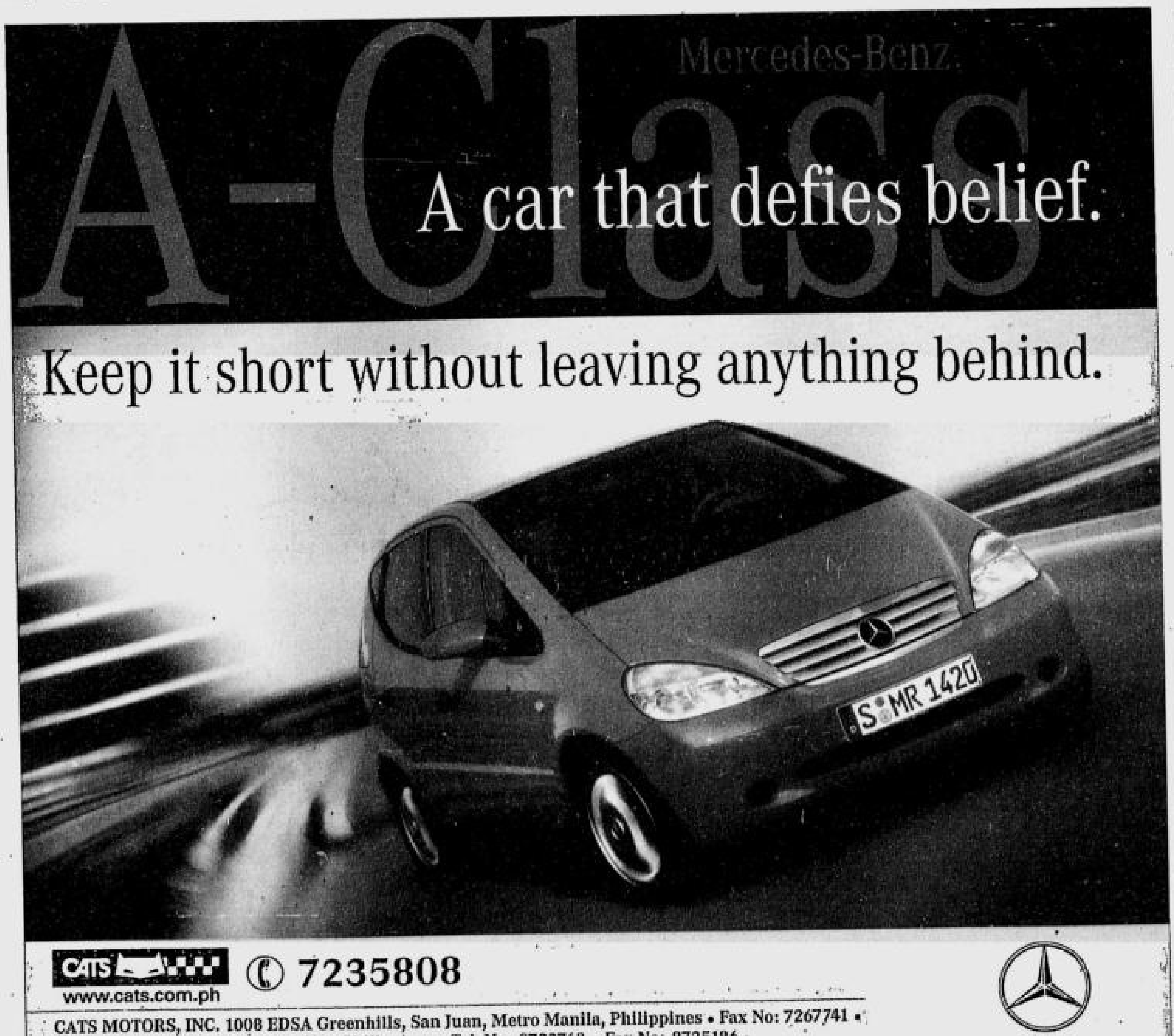
Just before the election, a Chinese group called for an end to the affirmative-action policies, saying they were unfair and holding back the country.

The call stirred little reaction at the time. But a few months ago, Mahathir belatedly condemned it as "extremist." A Malay student group threatened a "jihad," or Muslim holy war, to defend affirmative action, and the Chinese backed off.

"Now, from a very harmonious society, we have a very contentious society," Mahathir said recently. "I do hope in the year 2001, people will return to their senses and revive the trend of racial harmony."

Yet when Mahathir's party recently invited Malay opposition groups to discuss national unity, Chinese leaders were excluded.

Lim Kit Siang, Malaysia's best-known Chinese opposition leader, warns that such efforts could be "a precursor to greater racial polarization." *AP*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France biggest political corruption trial opens

PARIS—France's biggest political corruption trial of recent years opens Monday when former foreign minister Roland Dumas appears in court charged with taking illegal gifts in a Taiwanese arms sales scandal.

Dumas, 78, will be accompanied in the dock by his former mistress Christine Deviers-Joncour, whose claims that she was paid millions of dollars to influence his decisions 10 years ago form the basis of the prosecution's case.

Also on trial are five others including the former president of French oil giant Elf, Loik Le Floch Prigent, and Alfred Sirven, another Elf executive suspected of controlling a massive slush-fund from his base in Switzerland.

Sirven, who has been on the run for four years and was last heard of in the Philippines, will be tried in absentia.

Dumas, a close friend of the late president Francois Mitterrand, is accused of having used his powers in 1989 to have ex-model Deviers-Joncour taken on as a highly-paid consultant at Elf, which was then a state-owned company.

According to her confessional book "The Whore of the Republic," Elf then gave Deviers-Joncour the task of winning Dumas' approval for a 2.7 billion dollar sale of warships to Taiwan. The frigates were made by another state company Thomson, which paid Elf for access to its worldwide lobbying network.

Dumas initially opposed the sale, but when it went ahead in 1991 Deviers-Joncour received a multi-million dollar commission from Elf, paid via Sirven's subsidiary in Switzerland. In all, between 1989 and 1993, it is alleged she was paid $9.25 million.

According to the prosecution, Dumas received several gifts bought with the Elf money, including a pair of luxury shoes worth $1,600, antique Greek statues and the use of a central Paris apartment. *AFP*

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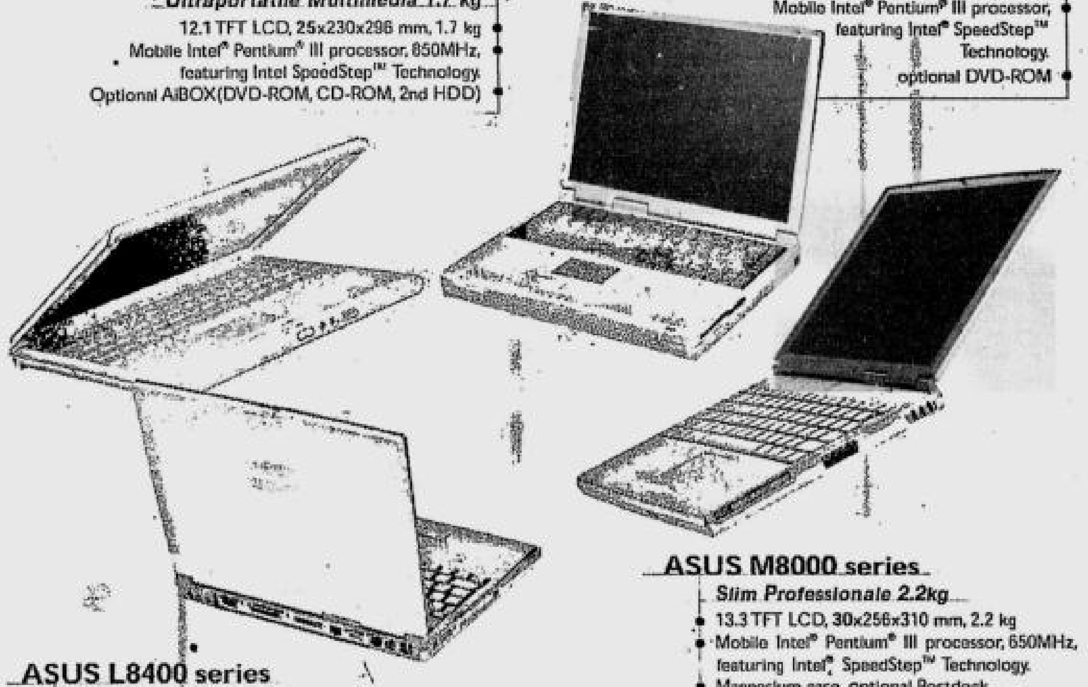

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Dau fire guts 400 stalls; ₱100M in property lost

MABALACAT, Pampanga—Local officials suspect arson in the three-hour fire that razed more than 400 stalls and a movie theater in Barangay Dau here on Saturday night.

No one was reported hurt or killed.

The fire, which began at 10:30 p.m. and lasted until 1:30 a.m., gutted the entire Dau Plaza Shopping Mall and the adjacent Rizal Theater, police said.

They said the fire destroyed at least P100 million in property. The stalls in the mall were selling clothes, toys, houseware, grocery items and smuggled imported goods from the former Clark Air Base.

It was the biggest fire that hit the town's commercial district, Mayor Marino Morales said.

More than 10 firetrucks from various towns in Pampanga, the Mimosa Leisure Estate, Clark Development Corp. and Dee Hwa Liong Enterprises arrived to stop the fire.

While the origin of the fire has yet to be determined by local fire officials, Morales said policemen patrolling the district on Saturday night heard simultaneous explosions around the building.

The smell of gasoline also reeked during the fire, Morales, quoting one of the three policemen on duty, said.

Edmundo Soriaga, 31, the mall's security guard, said he heard an explosion coming from the building.

Morales said most of the stalls were not covered by insurance. The building and land, leased by a prominent family here, was insured for P1 million. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Communists warn GMA: No deals with Estrada

By **Delfin Mallari Jr.**
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THE SELF-EXILED founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines has warned new President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo against entering into any shady deals with ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"The people cannot tolerate any shady compromise deal between the outgoing and the incoming presidents. The change of Presidents, from Estrada to Arroyo, should not be merely a change of chief oppressor and chief exploiter," said Jose Maria Sison, chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front, in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER.

Sison said Mr. Estrada had no choice but to resign and was in no position to demand immunity from prosecution.

The CPP head urged protesters not to indulge in euphoria and complacency.

"The struggle against the fallen ruling clique is not yet complete even as a new president comes to power. We must carry this struggle through to the end," Sison added.

Sison urged the new President to immediately address several concerns including arresting and subjecting to criminal proceedings Estrada, the Marcoses and their cronies and make them yield their ill-gotten wealth.

In Quezon province, leaders of several religious groups urged the people to remain vigilant as they considered the people's struggle unfinished and the assumption to power of Macapagal as an "empty victory."

"We will not sleep with this empty victory," said Fr. Raul Enriquez, spokesperson of Gomburza, a national association of priests and pastors.

Enriquez said the former civilian and military officials of former President Estrada "were all refugees from a sinking ship."

"There would be no healing without justice. There would be no true reconciliation unless we first render justice to the . . . Filipino people," he said.

The vice chair of the Kapatiran at Alyansang Alay para sa Kaunlaran ng Bayan or Kaakbay-Quezon said "it is ironic that in these trying times, some personalities of the erstwhile Estrada administration are riding the waves of opportunism—all of them fence sitters."

"It is high time that we learn from the lessons of history so that we may never have an Edsa 3 in the future," said United Church of Christ in the Philippines pastor Noel Suministrado in an e-mailed statement from Geneva.

He expressed disgust over the "wave of politicians and Estrada officials that descended on Edsa."

He reminded the people "not to forget those traitors who hours ago were just clinging on to power and suddenly found it too precarious, jumped on the other side and proclaimed themselves (to be) on the people's side."

Another priest, Dodie Sayson, chair of the Social Action Center of the Diocese of Gumaca, warned the new President to be careful in her dealings with politicians as he expressed disgust over the swarm of political faces now gravitating around her.

"She should remember that it's the people she needs to consult when it concerns a serious matter," Sayson said.

In Naga City, the caravan of the Erap Resign Movement in Bicol left on Saturday, hoping they could still partake of the euphoria of the Edsa People Power II triumph.

Naga Mayor Sulpicio Roco Jr., younger brother of Sen. Raul Roco, said the city government and the ERM mobilized some 1,000 protesters from this city. *Delfin Mallari Jr. and Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

200 American troops arrive for war games

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—Amid the economic and political crisis that besieged the country for almost three months, about 200 American soldiers arrived here for a three-week military exercise with Philippine Air Force personnel.

But Maj. Allan Ballesteros, civil military operations officer of the PAF's 600th Air Base Wing here, said the exercises had nothing to do with the ongoing political crisis.

Dubbed "Teak Piston 01-2," the exercises from Jan. 18 to Feb. 5, are being held under the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippine and United States governments.

As the United Opposition held last-minute negotiations on Friday night with ousted President Joseph Estrada, American military officials shortened by three hours the curfew of some 200 members of the United States Air Force 353rd Special Operations Group.

The American troops were ordered back to the Clark economic zone at 9 p.m. No explanations were provided as to why the curfew period, which usually lasted until midnight, was prolonged.

They arrived at 10 a.m. Thursday here aboard a C-5 military plane.

Ballesteros said the American soldiers, all members of the US Air Force stationed in the Asia-Pacific region, will participate mainly in lectures on maintenance of aircraft and related areas of aircraft technology.

According to a PAF press statement, 203 Filipino soldiers will join the exercises. It said the joint training includes lectures and actual scenarios on airborne operations, fast-rope exhibitions, C-130 operations and helicopter refueling.

Four Philippine aircraft, including a C-130, two F-5/S211 and a B-205, and five American aircraft (three MH 53J special operations helicopters and two MC-130P planes) will be used in the exercises.

Teak Piston 01-2 is part of the small-scale joint Philippine-US military exercise this year. The large-scale Balikatan 2001, where thousands of Filipino and American troops are expected to participate, is scheduled from April to May this year.

Ballesteros said the seven wing commands of the PAF here have been placed on red alert since Thursday because of the rallies in Metro Manila.

The major PAF's wing commands here include the 600th ABW and the Special Operations Wing. A squadron of the 5th Fighter Wing is also temporarily stationed here because the runways in Basa Air Base in Floridablanca, Pampanga, need to be repaired.

At least two freedom fighter planes (F-5) from the Air Force City here left Clark Saturday morning to help in the reconnaissance of the PAF on Edsa and in Malacañang, according to Ballesteros.

The planes returned to Clark before noon, he said.

Ballesteros also said there were no indications that the airport here was being prepared for Estrada's eventual departure for other countries like Australia.

Contrary to reports, Clark International Airport Corp. officials said there was no plane on standby here for Estrada and his family. *Jun Malig and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

January 19, 2001

To my fellow Filipinos,

I have been in hiding since I came out as the surprise witness last December 22. However, I have kept in touch with my co-workers at Equitable PCI Bank and I am told that malicious rumors continue to discredit the Bank. I am saddened by the news because it not only affects an institution I have built my career with but also colleagues who are not only my co-workers but also many of whom are my friends.

I am grateful for your support after my testimony on the documents which were subpoenaed and submitted in compliance with the directives of the Impeachment Court. I will be heartened if you will continue to express the same support for the institution that I value dearly. I have been with the Bank for 19 years and I have learned the value of hard work, professionalism, integrity, and loyalty by working in this Bank all those years. There are many countless people in the Bank who believe, as I do, that banking should be governed by these values. It is thus unfair for the stakeholders of the Bank – its depositors, its employees, and clients to suffer unduly because of baseless accusations.

I am also told that certain groups are calling for the boycott of some banks perceived to be crony banks and they have included Equitable PCI Bank. I am saddened by this call as it seems to disregard the role that many of the Bank's officers have taken in the impeachment trial before it was suspended.

Believe me when I tell you that it was not easy to come out to speak the truth, notwithstanding threats to our lives and our families. And it was with the full support of management that we had been able to come out. The Bank provided us with lawyers, security officers, moral and financial support to help us perform our duty to uphold the truth and our duty as responsible citizens. We were allowed to take time off from our busy work schedules precisely to fulfill this duty at the Impeachment Court. If you believed in us and supported us, we hope you will also be unwavering in your support in the institution that has allowed us to fully exercise this duty that has won your trust and belief.

The Bank stood behind my colleagues and me as we contributed to our country's quest for truth. I appeal to you to defend us against malicious parties. Please stand behind the Bank as solidly as you have expressed your support for my colleagues and me.

I pray for all of us and I hope that our country will be better for this.

(SGD.) CLARISSA G. OCAMPO

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It has exacted a great toll on our personal lives, cast doubt on the integrity of the institution we work for, strained the perseverance of all the people who make up Equitable PCI Bank.

When we were ordered to tell the truth, there were many who doubted. There were some who left us. And yet there were many who stood by us all this time.

In hindsight, it was all worth it. And we're glad to have been a part of it all.

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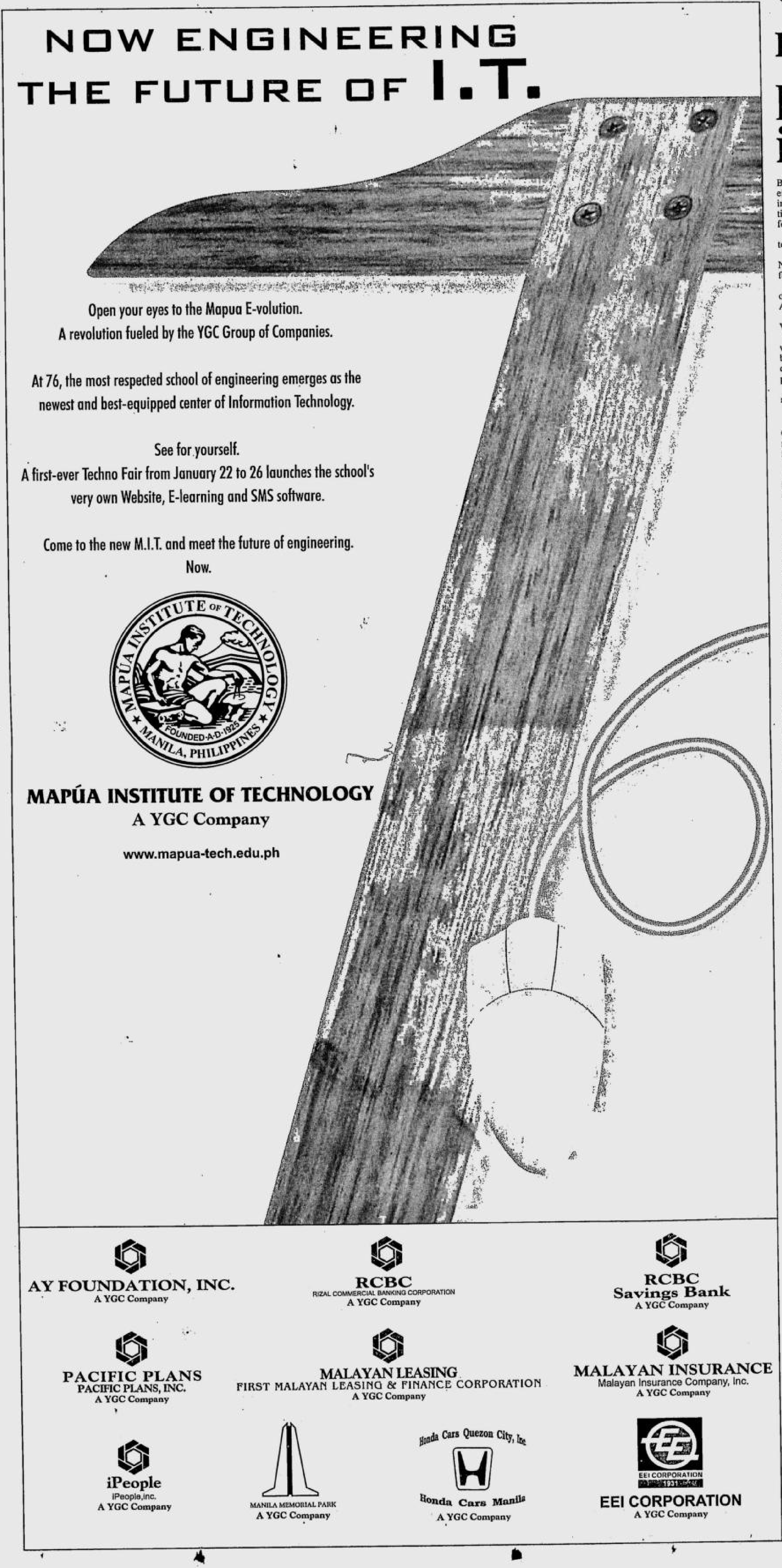

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Ouster reshapes politics in North

BAGUIO CITY—Despite President Estrada's ouster, eight members of the Nationalist People's Coalition in Pampanga aligned with the erstwhile administration party Lapian ng Masang Pilipino have not defected to the opposition.

The LAMP in Pampanga remained solid, according to Arayat Mayor Benigno Espino, NPC spokesman.

However, Gov. Manuel Lapid, provincial Lakas-NUCD chair, said he has begun to receive defection feelers from local LAMP members.

In Zambales, only Gov. Vicente Magsaysay and one mayor are with the LAMP, according to Rep. Antonio Diaz.

Diaz joined the NPC after former Speaker Manuel Villar Jr. bolted the LAMP last October.

In Tarlac, Rep. Jesli Lapus said local politicians were not dependent on who the next president should be. He said Tarlac politics, especially in the third district, was largely decided by those entrenched in power, meaning the Cojuangcos.

"Tarlac, however, is a Gloria country," Lapus noted.

Baguio bolts

In Baguio City, Mayor Mauricio Domogan, Cordillera chair of the Lakas-NUCD, said he and the members of the city council have withdrawn support for Estrada.

Domogan, who was endorsed by Estrada in the 1998 elections although they belonged to different parties, said they are "happy that the (people's) trust and confidence were removed for (Estrada)."

"Under the circumstances, everybody is expected to withdraw their support for the President," he said.

Baguio Rep. Bernardo Vergara, on the other hand, said the NPC, a major party under LAMP, is already conducting talks with Ms Macapagal to link up with a new administration-led coalition that will support her succession.

Vergara was a key figure in the establishment of the so-called Rainbow Coalition during the administration of former President Fidel Ramos.

He said the NPC still dominates that alliance in the House of Representatives with 108 members against the 31 affiliated with the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP), led by former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara, and the 40 representatives affiliated with LAMP.

'No jumping ship'

"There will be no jumping ship. We anticipate instead the offer of reconciliation and that will speed up the process of government. The (air of) vindictiveness was what affected (former President) Corazon Aquino when she assumed office in 1986 and that is why she was confronted by so many coup attempts. We hope (opposition legislators now backing Ms Macapagal) will not be vindictive, so we can work to restore confidence in the Philippines," he said.

In Ilocos Norte, the Marcoses were silent and refused to give comments on the fate of Estrada.

Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, who had been in her hometown in Batac since early this week, declined to comment on the issue.

The Marcoses were the earliest to withdraw their support for Estrada late last year. The falling out came after Estrada's repeated reference to the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos as a dictator.

Last Wednesday, Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced that they were still firming up their alliances with either the Lakas-NUCD or the Partido ng Masang Pilipino.

Lakas mantle

The Lakas-NUCD provincial chairmanship is still being held by former Ilocos Norte Rep. Simeon Valdez, uncle of the late strongman Marcos.

The Fariñases, another close Estrada ally, were also silent on his resignation. Laoag City Mayor Roger Fariñas, who ran under LAMP in 1998, is reportedly in Hong Kong.

His brother, Ilocos Norte Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas, is reportedly in Manila.

In Bulacan, Gov. Josefina de la Cruz said she and the Bulacan provincial board withdrew their support for Estrada after the 11 pro-Estrada senators betrayed the Filipino trust when they stopped the opening of the bank documents in the impeachment court.

De la Cruz, who earlier promised support to Estrada during Estrada's visit to Bulacan on Jan. 10, admitted that Cavite Gov. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr.'s decision influenced their decision to withdraw support for the ousted President. *Tonette Orejas, Anselmo Roque and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Avigail Olarte, Vincent Cabreza, Cristina Arzadon and Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Change of judges delays Javier case

By Hazel Villa
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique—A fourth judge has been assigned to handle the six-year trial of the celebrated Evelio Javier murder case here.

The Supreme Court assigned on Jan. 3 Judge Rudy Castrojas, former Iloilo City prosecutor, to replace Judge Sylvia Jurao of the Antique Regional Trial Court, Branch 10.

Judge Jurao temporarily held the post left vacant by Judge Antonio Natino of the RTC Branch 12 in 1996.

Natino requested the SC to relieve him of his duties and was temporarily replaced by Jurao in 1997. Jurao handled cases in the two court branches.

"My brother's case is tried only once a month because she (Jurao) is handling too many cases. Hopefully, with this new judge, the trial will move faster," said Antique Gov. Exequiel Javier, younger brother of Evelio.

Jurao, before she was taken off the case, has set the next hearings for the Javier case on Jan. 22, 23 and 24.

Former Antique politician Arturo Pacificador, a close ally of then President Ferdinand Marcos, was charged with plotting the assassination of Javier on Feb. 11, 1986.

Pacificador, who fled the country after Marcos was toppled, surrendered in 1995 and is now detained at the provincial jail here.

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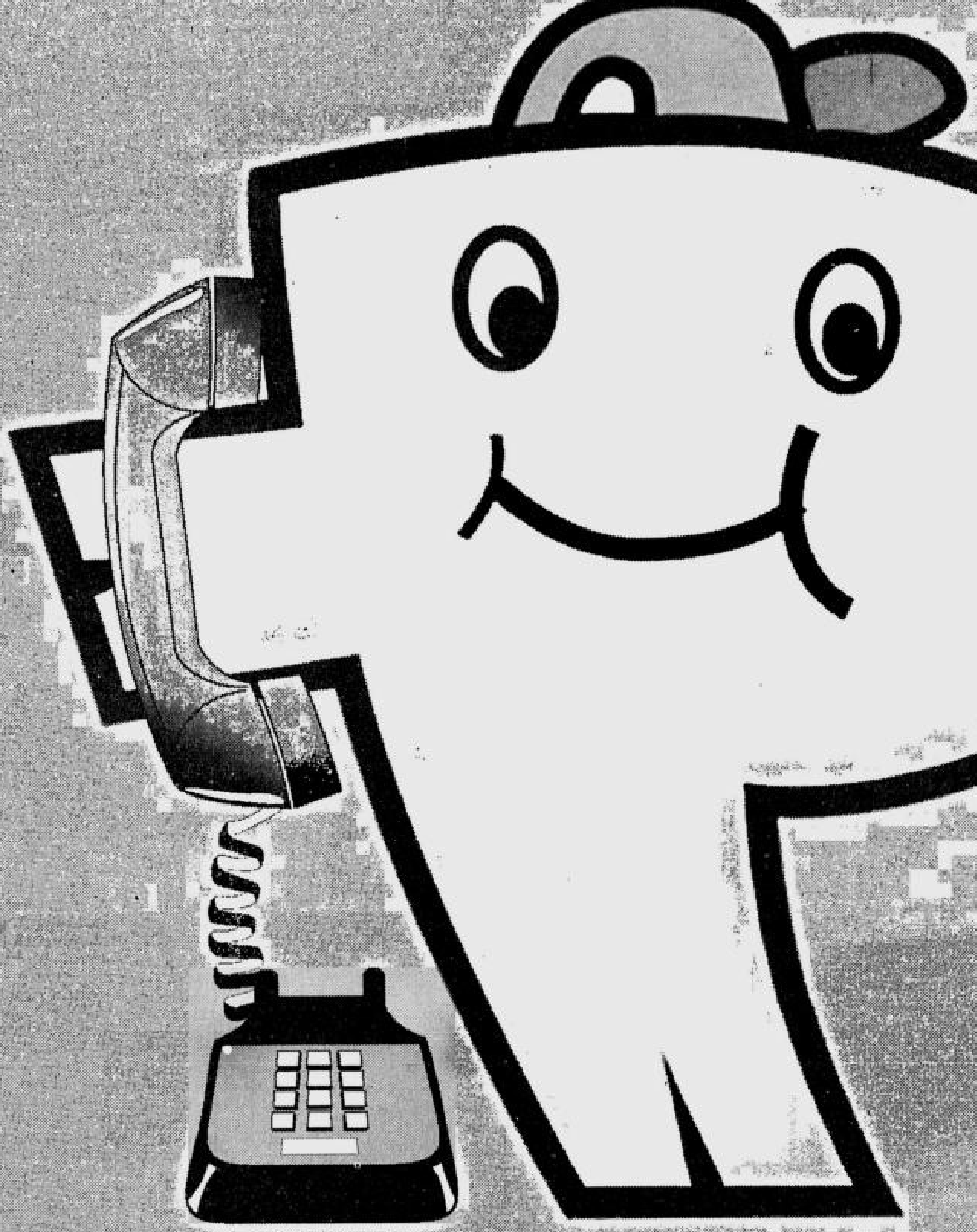

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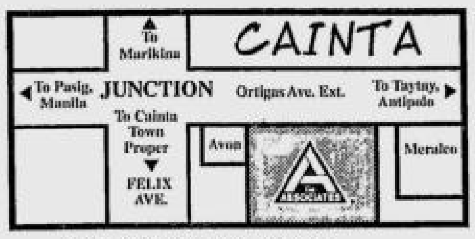
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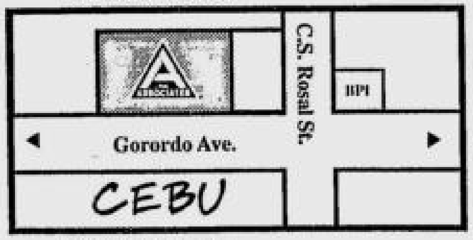
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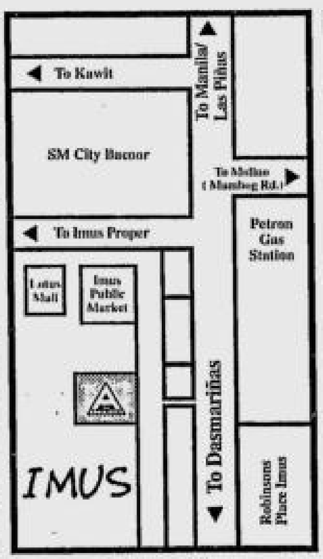
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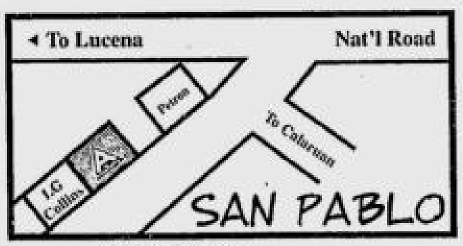
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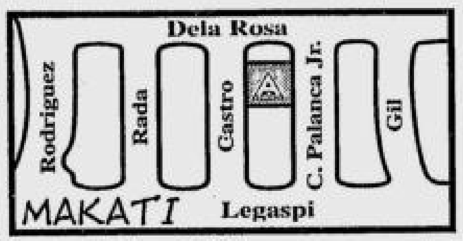
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Economic recovery in 2 years seen

(From page A1)

Macapagal-Arroyo.

Ms Macapagal, a US-trained economist, faces an uphill task of rebuilding the economy that has been hit by eroding investor confidence and political uncertainty amid allegations of excessive graft and cronyism under her ousted predecessor, Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

"These are the years that the locusts have eaten," Romulo said, referring to Estrada's 31-month presidency that ended Saturday after the military withdrew its support and most Cabinet officials resigned amid massive protests.

"It will take a minimum of two years to get back on our feet. But some are unkind. They say it will take five years or even more," Romulo said.

For the short term, however, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas expects the embattled peso to recover despite lower interest rates following the resolution of the country's political crisis.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the expected rise of the peso following the "disappearance of the political risk" allowed room for a cut in interest rates, which had been jacked up to cushion the plunging currency during the crisis.

The peso bounced back to close at 47.50 to the dollar on Friday from its record low of 55.75 on Jan. 18. The peso rose after the military announced that it was withdrawing its support for then President Joseph Estrada.

Buenaventura said he expected the peso to hover around the same level as the Thai baht that closed last week at 43.03-06 to the greenback.

Buenaventura said "without the political risk," the peso should settle at 45-46 against the dollar.

He said that he expected a "certain correction" in the peso level on Monday because of the strong rebound on Friday.

"With the peso likely to gain more strength, interest rates are likely to come off," BSP Deputy Governor Amanda Tetangco said.

Foreign investors first started packing up in January last year after Estrada allegedly intervened to save a business crony, Dante Tan, from being investigated in the country's largest stock manipulation scandal.

The scandal involving BW Resources Corp. made the Philippine stock market among the poorest performers in Southeast Asia, with trading volumes slashed by more than half from a year ago.

"What the business community needs is transparency and a level playing field," Ms Macapagal said Saturday after she was sworn in as the 14th President of the republic.

She declined to forecast by how much the peso should recover to allow enough breathing space for the economy, saying: "As an economist let me tell you that it's not safe to give a number."

She said "confidence" was a vital factor for the currency.

Ms Macapagal has to contend with a plethora of problems to tame the economy hit by runaway interest rates, inflation and unemployment, weak currency and stocks and a yawning budget deficit.

Romulo

Her first appointment to the Cabinet was Finance Secretary Romulo, whose experience as a previous budget secretary in the Aquino administration should help contain the national budget deficit.

Romulo, who went on to become senator and is now a businessman, said "the first thing we will do is provide leadership by example."

"We will show through governance that there is a level playing field and a rule of law," he said, citing tax collection as an example where rules would be strictly enforced to reduce the deficit.

Romulo said efficient tax collection was the key to reducing the budget deficit and that borrowing should be a last resort.

"I think we have to expand our tax base. There are so many taxes that have not been collected," Romulo said.

"Borrowing should be the last resort. We should have investments here," he said, adding that he did not plan to impose new taxes.

The national budget deficit ballooned to P136.11 billion in 2000, more than double the original target. The government expects a budget deficit this year of as much as P130 billion. In 1999, the government incurred a deficit of P113 billion.

The deficit, blamed mainly on poor tax collection, has been a concern for financial markets and multinational loan agencies.

Romulo, who has been closely associated with Ms Macapagal for a number of years, said he was not planning to impose new taxes. He would instead focus on existing taxes but with better administration.

"What the business community needs is a better, level playing field and the rule of law," the former senator said. "Everybody should pay taxes. There should not be a privileged few."

The political crisis, triggered by accusations in October that Estrada amassed wealth illegally while in office, led to a plunge in business confidence and the flight of portfolio investments.

"We will be able to bring order to the confidence of investors so they will start coming in. We hope there will be more confidence in the way the government is run," Romulo said.

Asked if the finance department would continue investigating the BW Resources Corp. price-fixing scandal, Romulo said: "This is an issue of trust and confidence, of (a) level playing field of the rule of law."

Shares in the gaming firm BW Resources, now called Fairmont Holdings, surged 5,000 percent before dramatically collapsing in 1999.

The company's major shareholder, Dante Tan, has been accused of insider trading. Allegations rose during Estrada's impeachment trial that the ex-movie actor had also been involved.

Concepcion

"We are back in business," an elated Raul Concepcion, chair of the Federation of Philippine Industries, said.

He said economic recovery with the strengthening of the peso would help contain bleeding among businesses clobbered by steep interest rates.

"When the peso was down to 55 (to the dollar), many of the businesses were beginning to close shop and even before that some were even laying off people and implementing a four-day work-week," Concepcion said.

Las Piñas Rep. Manuel Villar, a supporter of Ms Macapagal and prominent business tycoon, was likewise optimistic.

"We are hoping that after a few days pass and the new administration normalizes, investors will look at us again and local businessmen will start putting money back into expansion," the former Speaker said.

Guillermo Luz, head of the elite Makati Business Club, said the top priority of businesses was to protect as many jobs as possible.

"It's a responsibility that we should take to rebuild the economy. We need investment and we need more jobs in order to get our economy back in track," Luz said.

The Philippine economy was forecast to grow just above 3 percent this year before the political turmoil culminated with Estrada's ouster, from about 4 percent last year.

Unemployment hit double digits late last year while inflation was projected to rise to an average of up to 7.5 percent in 2001. ***Reports from AFP, Reuters and AP***

Maids rejoice with victory parade in HK

(From page A1)

Thousands of them cheered as a procession led by women beating gongs paraded through downtown Hong Kong with an effigy of Estrada bearing the words "People's verdict: Guilty."

Marking what they said was the people's triumph of "toppling another tyrant," organizer Cynthia Tellez said the event was originally planned as a protest demanding the ouster of Estrada.

"We are very happy as it turns out to be a victory celebration instead of a protest march," said Tellez, a spokeswoman for the Erap Resign Network-Hong Kong that embraces 30 groups and over 10,000 members.

"Estrada's downfall has been a significant step in the Filipino's quest for a free, just and democratic Philippines. If ever justice is served, Estrada and his cronies should then be tried and punished for their crimes to the people," a statement from the alliance said.

The parade, featuring dancing, singing and drama along Hong Kong's downtown streets, aimed to spread the joy of Estrada's replacement by new President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a woman promising reform, to thousands of Filipino maids enjoying their day off on Sunday.

"It's certainly a very happy moment," said Amelita Fernandez, 32, a domestic worker. "We are hoping the new government will boost our economy and our currency, which went straight down during Estrada's time."

Sally Acabals, who also works as a domestic helper, shared her view.

"Estrada has weakened the economy by more than 50 percent, and forced many people out of work," said the 32-year-old domestic helper.

Her husband, a taxi driver in Manila, earns three times less than what she gets in Hong Kong per month.

Acabals and many other Filipinos who gathered in the downtown parks Sunday said they preferred to work in the Philippines if the new government promised them stable and well-paid jobs.

"I miss my daughter very much, who was only seven months old when I left a year ago," said Acabals. "Now she only knows me on phones or in pictures."

"I will go back if they pay me as good as I get here," said Vicky Tolidoll, 23, who had just gotten out of a phone booth with a long queue of Filipino maids waiting to hear their families' voices.

A majority of the 140,000 Filipino residents in Hong Kong work as live-in maids.

About six million Filipinos work overseas, mainly as domestic helpers. They ship billions of dollars home to their families in the Philippines—but to earn the money they often spend years away from their families and sometimes suffer abuse in the hands of their employers.

"The challenge now is whether the Macapagal administration is able to work for its people; we certainly don't want to support another absolute power," said Tellez.

Estrada, however, was not everybody's enemy on Sunday.

"I think Estrada is good," said Lito Tisda, 36, a domestic worker.

Estrada is the second Philippine president to be ousted by people power. The first was the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos who was toppled in the 1986 Edsa Revolution after 21 years in power. ***AP***

UN chief praises RP 'people power'

(From page A1)

down amid massive protests and the military's withdrawal of support.

Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said Ms Macapagal, who visited China last year when she was then Vice President, was "China's old friend."

"I am also very happy that the change in the Philippines took place peacefully. I think it's a victory for democracy," said Annan, who spoke to reporters after meeting Tang in Beijing.

"I wish the new President every success and I look forward to working with her," he added.

Tang said Ms Macapagal's late father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, "is also an old friend of China."

"The change of government, therefore, will not indicate a major change in its foreign policies, at least where China is concerned," Tang said. "I think the policy toward China on the part of the Philippines will be continued."

Chinese President Jiang Zemin also sent a congratulatory message to Ms Macapagal, according to Tang.

Disputes over fishing rights and contested islands in the South China Sea have caused tensions between Beijing and Manila. In 1999, Philippine Navy patrol boats chased Chinese fishing boats away from a disputed shoal and accidentally sunk two of them.

"China will make joint efforts as always with the government and people of the Philippines in enhancing mutual trust and reciprocal cooperation in all sectors," state news agency Xinhua quoted foreign ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao as saying.

The brief report made no mention of Estrada, who also visited China last year.

In Taipei, Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian also congratulated Ms Macapagal a day after she took her oath of office.

The Philippines does not recognize Taiwan, which China regards as part of its territory awaiting reunification, but Manila maintains close economic ties with Taipei.

For its part, Singapore expressed confidence that Ms Macapagal would restore confidence in the Philippines.

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said in a congratulatory message that Ms Macapagal was assuming office under challenging circumstances, but "Singapore is confident that you can provide the much-needed leadership of the Philippines."

"You can make a difference for the Filipino people and restore confidence in your country," Goh said as he wished her "every success."

Goh said he looked forward to working with her to strengthen Singapore-Manila ties.

In London, British Prime Minister Tony Blair sent a message of congratulations to Ms Macapagal. Foreign Secretary Robin Cook also welcomed the fact the latest crisis to grip the Philippines had been resolved "peacefully and constitutionally."

"The Philippines is a vibrant democracy that plays a significant role in the region and is a good friend to Britain," Cook said.

"I look forward to working with President Macapagal-Arroyo and her administration," he added.

The largely peaceful transition in the Philippines won praise elsewhere in Asia that is grappling with a host of simmering socioeconomic crises.

Newspapers

But newspapers in Taiwan, which had its own brush with a constitutional crisis when opposition parties banded together to threaten the president with dismissal, warned against toppling leaders without holding elections.

"People power appears to win victory after victory, but being forced to take to the streets time after time is a tragic fate," Taiwan's United Daily News said.

"The opposition which mobilized the people must be aware that it is setting the worst precedent for the Philippines," Taiwan's mass-circulation China Times cautioned.

"From now on, politicians will not work in the presidency, parliament or elections, but try to control street organizations and seek support from the military," it predicted.

But elsewhere, the response was more favorable.

Thailand's Nation daily newspaper hailed what it called "another remarkable development of democracy" in Southeast Asia, praising the decisiveness of the guardians of the system in upholding the national interest.

"If democracy is attained, then the challenge for the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia has less to do with the people's choice than with whether elected leaders adhere to the law, exercise fairness and honesty and have the courage to eliminate the ills in their societies," it said.

Newspapers in Indonesia, whose own President Abdurrahman Wahid is being probed by parliament over financial scandals, gave blanket coverage to Estrada's downfall.

"That country, at the very least, has proven that whoever has power but then violates the people's mandate, will certainly be rolled over by a wave of morality," Media Indonesia said under the headline "The Voice of God from the Philippines."

In Japan, newspapers praised the peaceful nature of the transition. The Mainichi Shimbun hailed "an example of democracy on display in a bloodless political change."

The crisis came to a head after the country's military commanders rallied to the opposition on Friday and Taiwan's newspapers were not alone in raising a note of concern.

South Korea's Chosun Ilbo praised the expression of "people power" but highlighted what it called "lingering concern" that the military had once again played a decisive role.

"The military should avoid even the suspicion that it wants to meddle in the political process," it said.

Earlier, the US Embassy in Manila welcomed Ms Macapagal's assumption of the presidency.

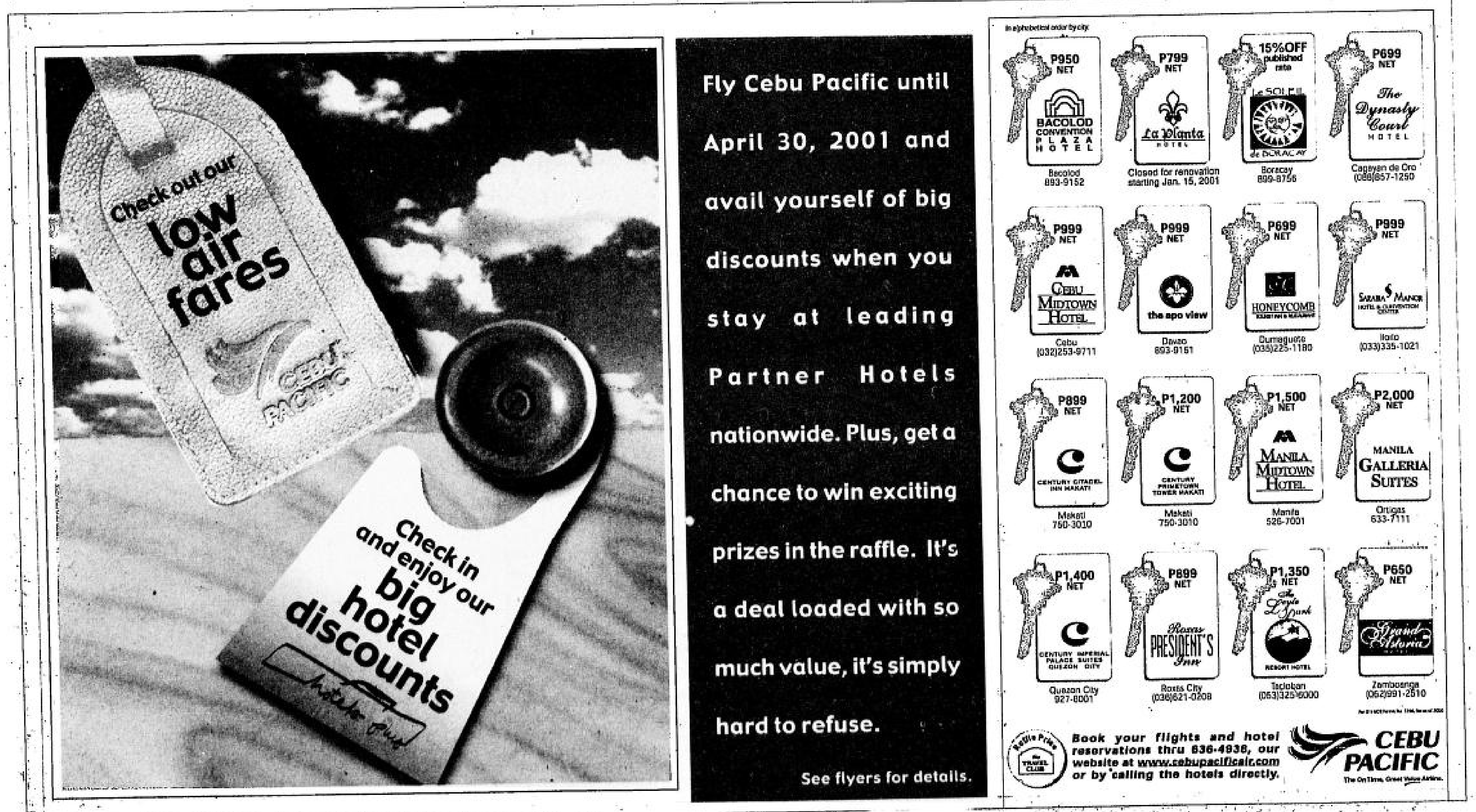
"We have had an exceptionally strong working relationship with new President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the past, and are looking forward to working with her to strengthen US-Philippine relations even further," it said in a statement.

Australia's Prime Minister John Howard described Ms Macapagal's takeover of the presidency as the only way out of the crisis.

Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, whose relations with Estrada were strained over his support for his jailed rival Anwar Ibrahim, welcomed the appointment of Ms Macapagal.

But opposition leader Lim Kit Siang predicted that the change would leave Asia's longest serving elected leader feeling increasingly isolated and threatened by pressures for reforms.

"He has become the last survivor in this region who refused to step down or yield to popular demands for far-reaching political, economic and social changes," Lim said. ***Reports from AP, AFP and Reuters***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Charges vs Erap pressed

(From page A1)

he added.

Palace negotiators also wanted Ms Macapagal to issue a public statement "extolling him (Estrada) to the highest heaven," Corona said.

As President, Estrada was immune from criminal charges and had to be tried before the Senate impeachment court, where he would have been forced to step down if convicted.

Now that he is unseated, the Senate trial has become academic and Estrada can be tried in any court.

Alex Magno, a member of Ms Macapagal's transition team, said "all the cases that have been filed against (Estrada) will proceed," including possible charges of economic plunder.

More charges could be filed against Estrada based on the pieces of evidence that came out during the Senate trial, including the use of a false identity, unexplained wealth, falsification of public documents and misdeclaration of his assets and liabilities, according to Ms Macapagal's aides.

3 congressmen

Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo and two other congressmen earlier urged the new government to file charges against Estrada and his associates, saying there could be no healing without justice.

At the same time, they called for the opening of the second sealed envelope in the possession of the Senate court.

The court barred House prosecutors access to the envelope which allegedly contained records of Estrada's P3.3-billion secret account with Equitable PCI Bank. Suppression of the evidence led to a five-day bloodless uprising that forced Estrada to step down.

Arroyo, one of the House prosecutors, said the funds could have come from the illegal drug trade.

"Healing means that those with different political opinions should be united. But there can never be a healing process without justice," Arroyo said, referring to Ms Macapagal's inaugural speech in which she called for "a time to heal."

"The proper slogan is healing should be with justice. Justice should not be forgotten," Arroyo said.

"If we don't impose sanctions, nothing will happen to our country," the Makati congressman added, explaining that criminals are jailed not merely to punish them but to set an example to everyone.

Quezon City Rep. Feliciano Belmonte, head of the House prosecution panel, and Bohol Rep. Ernesto Herrera, harped on the same theme during the radio program.

"Society cannot exist without discipline. There can be no unity, no magnanimity without justice, without restitution and punishment. This is one of the complaints that rose after Edsa Part I," Herrera, one of the complainants in the impeachment complaint, said.

"We can't regain confidence of the investors and the respect of other countries unless we do it the right way. No one will believe in government, they'll think that it's all right to steal," he added.

Arroyo and Herrera, co-hosts of the dzRH radio program, said many people and leaders of organizations had called them up, saying Estrada should be charged, tried and punished.

Herrera said people were complaining that 15 years after the 1986 Edsa Revolution, the government had yet to recover the bulk of the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses.

Arroyo said that the 11-man team was scheduled to meet last night for a get-together and that they would be coming out with a position on the matter.

Herrera said the new administration should investigate the cases of missing PR man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and casino employee Edgar Bentain.

Dacer was reported to have been abducted because of his knowledge about the BW scandal, while Bentain went missing after he leaked a videotape showing Estrada gambling with friends.

Arroyo said people also wanted Estrada's associates, like businessman Jaime Dichaves and Charlie "Atong" Ang, prosecuted.

Dichaves and Ang had already left the country. Arroyo said the new government should create a task force to go after them.

Other groups

A group, calling itself Pagbabago sa Pilipinas, also urged the new government to prosecute Estrada as well as all government officials and private citizens involved in his crimes.

The group asked Ms Macapagal "to begin the long, slow but sure march to conviction" of the ousted leader.

"While healing and unity is important, there can be no genuine peace, no real healing without justice," the group said.

Lawyer Francis Pangilinan also suggested the creation of a special criminal court that would try Estrada.

In Davao City, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) urged Ms Macapagal to "set in motion" the immediate prosecution of Estrada to complete the "goals and spirit of People Power II."

"People Power II will be incomplete without Estrada, his cronies and pals involved in high crimes, prosecuted and punished," said Alvin Luque, Bayan-Davao City secretary general. ***With reports from Agnes Donato in Manila; Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau; and Inquirer wires***

Gloria urged: Shun politicos, turncoats

(From page A1)

Mercado, Director General Panfilo Lacson and Deputy Armed Forces Chief of Staff Jose Calimlim, said Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño.

Ms Macapagal has replaced Lacson.

Marie Hilao-Enriquez, secretary general of the human rights group Karapatan, said AFP Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes should also be dismissed.

Casiño described Mercado, Lacson and Calimlim as "opportunists" who joined the Oust-Estrada Movement to save themselves from being dragged by the imminent downfall of the Estrada regime.

The three officials were among the most active collaborators of the deposed President in efforts to sabotage the Oust-Estrada Movement and harass and inflict harm on its members, he said.

"We are especially insistent on these three because their connivance with Estrada's all-out war policy in Mindanao and elsewhere resulted in the killing and maiming of hundreds, the immeasurable destruction of property, and the dislocation of thousands," the Bayan leader said.

Enriquez said Ms Macapagal should be indebted not to the military and police officials but to the ordinary people who trooped to Edsa and eventually catapulted her to power.

"More than the military, it is the ordinary people whom she owes gratitude. Without the people, those officials would not have been pressured to withdraw their support to the corrupt, inept and sick Estrada regime," she said.

Songco of Pagbabago maintained that while some of the leaders who led the anti-Estrada movement would have to assume positions in the government, others must stay behind to watch how the leadership is doing.

"Some of us will have to take on the challenge of governance, but we should not all jump into government," Songco said.

Luz, MBC executive director, asked for public vigilance in case Estrada and his supporters tried to get themselves back into power through the coming elections.

Three positions in the Commission on Elections were vacated, following the end of the term of Comelec chair Harriet Demetriou and two commissioners.

Luz particularly mentioned Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco who, he said, could be one of the people Estrada might use in manipulating the elections.

Luz described Tancangco as Estrada's "one-woman wrecking crew."

Turncoats

The prospects of a nine-year term for Ms Macapagal have sent former allies of Estrada scampering for every available seat in the Macapagal bandwagon, according to Lakas Rep. Federico Sandoval II of Malabon-Navotas.

Sandoval noted the "presence of legislators and government officials formerly identified with the Estrada administration" at the Linden Suites in Pasig City where the camp of Ms Macapagal temporarily had its headquarters until she was able to take her oath on Saturday.

"Former Lakas congressmen who left us and joined Erap's LAMP coalition in 1998 now want to get back into the party. And so with other government officials who want to court the good graces of the President," Sandoval said.

Ms Macapagal faces a nine-year term should she win reelection in 2004 when the original term of Mr. Estrada expires.

Should she win in 2004, that means she could serve as President until 2010.

"Nine years in the opposition in what is expected to be a very professional stewardship by Ms Macapagal would not only be backbreaking but frustrating," Sandoval said.

But he was quick to point out that everyone not aligned with Ms Macapagal in the past would be completely shut out."

"Those who have served well need not worry about anything. This is part of the healing process the President talked about," he said.

But Valenzuela Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo I, also a Lakas congressman, said the "healing" process was becoming "*puro hiling* (all requests)."

"*Hiling* (requests) to join Lakas again, for positions, etc.," Gunigundo said.

He pointed out that Ms Macapagal's assumption to power "came so fast that no one in the former administration knew what hit them."

"Now the former President's men are scrambling to get somebody, anybody just to get close to Ms Macapagal," Gunigundo said.

Rights violators

Bayan's Casiño reminded Ms Macapagal that Lacson and Calimlim were among the "most notorious violators of human rights in the active service."

"They are fit for a rogue presidency like Estrada's, but not in an administration which is supposed to respect human rights and shun opportunism," he said.

Casiño said other last-minute defectors who should not be given a chance to serve in the newly installed government included Alfredo Lim, Andrew Gonzales, Jose Pardo, Rafael Buenaventura, Felipe Medalla, Liling Briones, Horacio Morales and Edicio de la Torre.

'I need to be alone. Go home'

(From page A1)

The end came so swiftly the next day, however.

The transition team of newly installed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said the mess left by the departing former first family reminded it of the hurried exit of the Marcoses from the Palace in 1986.

Led by Ms Macapagal's spokesperson Renato Corona, the team inspected the Presidential Residence just hours after the new President was sworn into office.

Missing pieces

Corona said the place was in disarray, indicating a "hurried departure."

Unwashed plates and silver, as well as half-finished bottles of soft drinks, were on the dining table and in the kitchen.

In Estrada's bedroom on the second floor, empty shoeboxes, hangers and papers were strewn everywhere, Corona said. The bed had no sheets, and the closets and drawers were half-open.

"It reminded me of the film clips that were taken in Malacañang after the first people power in 1986," Corona said in a phone interview.

He was referring to the time Ferdinand Marcos and his family fled the Palace after he was toppled. Some of the people who had stormed Malacañang after the Marcoses were gone had looted the place.

This time, Corona said in radio interviews that some items belonging to the Palace may have been inadvertently loaded in boxes by persons who had helped the family pack in haste on Friday and Saturday.

Corona said several items in the art collection of former first lady Imelda Marcos were reported missing by the Presidential Guard. The items included marble carvings and paintings.

"You know how extensive the art collection of Imelda Marcos was," he said.

"They might have taken some things out that should not have been taken out," he said.

Corona, however, said he was not charging the Estradas of stealing these items. "It may be that they were mistakenly taken by people helping them pack, but we intend to get them back."

Property book

Corona inspected the Palace for three hours with AFP Vice Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Jose Calimlim, new Presidential Security Group chief Glen Rabonza and the Presidential Guard commander, Maj. Lito Tabangcura.

Tabangcura said the Estradas did not take out anything that was not theirs. He said the former president even left behind some physical fitness equipment.

"The expensive paintings, curtains and other Malacañang stuff were left untouched," he said, adding that although the PR was in disarray, he did not see anything missing.

"We can see that in the property book. The property custodian will be able to say if anything is missing," he said, adding that a custodian officer accompanied them in their "walk through."

Some friends remained true to Estrada to the very end.

"He (Estrada) is taking it courageously," said former Press Secretary Rodolfo Reyes, head of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan, on Saturday.

Reyes, one of the few officials who remain loyal to the ousted president, said he has yet to submit his resignation to Ms Macapagal.

No media, please

He said Estrada would survive the political crisis with the help of his relatives and many friends.

"I just wanted to maintain my friendship with him," Reyes said when asked why he did not leave Estrada.

"He was a good friend to me . . . extra good to me," Reyes said, recalling how Estrada had allowed him to live at the Arlegui mansion near Malacañang to make it easier for him to get to work.

Some former Palace officials, who asked not to be named, said they were worried about the President and feared that he may take to heavy drinking to drown out his sorrows.

Banayo said that in his last hours at the Palace, Estrada was lamenting that he was not given the chance to prove his innocence in the Senate impeachment trial.

"He is going to face those charges," Banayo said, noting, however, that litigation here "takes time." ***(See related story on Page A1.)***

The gates of the North Greenhills subdivision in San Juan, Metro Manila, were closed to members of the press. Private guards at the gates said the Estrada family had given instructions that it wanted to be left alone.

Nixon Kua, general manager of the Philippine Tourism Authority and one of the last holdouts at the Palace with Estrada, said it was best that the former president be given time to deal with his crisis.

"Let's give him some privacy," he said.

Scramble on for positions in Cabinet

(From page A1)

She, however, was mum about the other appointees in her Cabinet. Corona said she would make the announcements today.

Corona said he has been designated as presidential spokesperson, but he will be given another post, which he declined to reveal.

A strong contender to head the Department of Budget and Management is Emilia Boncadin, according to Lakas spokesperson Hernando Perez.

Finance Secretary Romulo, a former budget secretary, recommended Boncadin, a budget undersecretary in the Ramos administration, as budget chief.

It was not certain whether Dinky Soliman would accept the position of social welfare secretary.

Alex Magno, an adviser of the United Opposition, said Soliman preferred to work with nongovernment organizations.

Soliman is a member of the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil) 2, one of major groups that called for Estrada's resignation.

Ms Macapagal said Saturday that she was thinking of appointing Soliman to the DSWD post.

Corona said filling up the position of Vice President was "not an issue yet."

Executive secretary

The new President is expected to name her executive and press secretaries today.

The contenders are Corona, Quezon City Rep. Feliciano Belmonte and Raul Gonzalez, former chair of Pagcor and vice president of the Government Service Insurance System.

A source said Ms Macapagal was likely to appoint Corona as executive secretary. Corona, head of Ms Macapagal's transition team, served as deputy presidential legal counsel and later as presidential legal counsel during the time of Ramos.

Gonzalez reportedly enjoys the President's trust, having served as press secretary of Ms Macapagal's father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, in the 1960s.

Talks have been persistent that Belmonte, head of the 11-member House prosecution panel in the impeachment trial of Estrada, has also been asked to fill the post.

But Belmonte, who is on his last term, has said he would challenge anyone running for mayor of Quezon City. The post is to be vacated by last-termer Ismael Mathay.

Mathay's son Chuck and actor Rudy Fernandez are expected to run for the same post.

Should Belmonte accept the position of executive secretary, the administration will most likely harness Quezon City Rep. Michael T. Defensor to run for mayor instead, the source said.

Earlier reports said Ms Macapagal had offered the housing portfolio to the 30-year-old congressman.

Defensor is a member of the "Spice Boys of Congress" which has maintained close ties with Ms Macapagal even when she was Vice President. He still has a term left in Congress.

But a close friend of Defensor, another "Spice Boy," said "Mike would more likely take the mayoralty post because the services would be more direct to the people."

Press secretary

Lawyer Francisco Pangilinan and Dante Ang are being considered for press secretary.

Pangilinan is the husband of actress-singer Sharon Cuneta.

Ang is Ms Macapagal's publicist and Kabayan newspaper publisher.

Rep. Sergio Apostol, another House prosecutor, is reportedly being tapped to become justice secretary.

Apostol, senior deputy minority floor leader, is on his last term as representative of the second district of Leyte.

Since Apostol has expressed his interest in running for Senate, a source in the President's camp said Avelino Villaraza, personal lawyer of former President Fidel Ramos, might be tapped as justice secretary.

Neda chief

In Cebu, former Gov. Emilio "Lito" Osmeña, Promdi chair, will decline a Cabinet position offered by the new President, according to his cousin Tomas Osmeña.

Tomas, a member of the Promdi executive committee, said Lito consulted him by telephone yesterday morning.

He said Lito expressed unwillingness to head the National and Economic Development Authority. Ms Macapagal offered the post to him on Saturday after she took her oath of office, according to Tomas.

But Tomas said his cousin was interested in serving as economic adviser of the new administration. "Lito has said this in many occasions. He is not asking and willing to accept any Cabinet position," Tomas said.

Aside from Lito, Ms Macapagal offered a Cabinet position to Paul Dominguez, another member of the Promdi executive committee.

But Tomas said Dominguez was also not keen. "He (Dominguez) is only interested in heading the office overseeing the development projects in Mindanao."

Transition team

To ensure that the takeover would be "effortless, seamless and smooth," the President has formed a six-member transition team.

"We want to ensure the public that we are prepared for this day and that there will be no hiatus or paralysis in the delivery of government services," Corona said.

Other members of the team are Susan Vargas, Renato Velasco and Isabela Gulampco, all heading divisions in the Office of the Vice President; Col. Carlos Holganza, Ms Macapagal's chief military aide, and Bobby Capco, OVP media director.

Ms Macapagal will be given the "fullest and best arrival honors" at Malacañang when she assumes duties officially today, the chief of the Presidential Guard, Maj. Lito Tabangcura, said.

Palace tour

Corona said Ms Macapagal might come over to Malacañang earlier than her first official duty of the day to make a tour of the offices there.

The transition team, he said, also conducted on Saturday an inspection of Malacañang to prepare for the President's eventual taking up of residence and official functions there.

She has the option to take up residence in Arlegui, which was where then Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos stayed during their respective administrations.

Corona said that Ms Macapagal could hold office either at the old Palace office or Mr. Estrada's former residence on the ground floor. ***With a report from Nagiel Bañacia, PDI Visayas Bureau***

People's coup: Bloodless, constitutional, democratic

(From page A1)

from Estrada and the shift of their loyalty to the constitutional successor ensured the peaceful transition of power to Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. In going to Edsa to announce its withdrawal, the Armed Forces leadership joined the civil society movement whose nerve center was the Edsa Shrine—the historic symbol of People Power I. The withdrawal was the single most decisive factor that made Estrada decide it was time to quit.

Loyalty shift

The shift of loyalty of the Armed Forces, led by the chief of staff, Gen. Angelo Reyes, not only triggered the mass resignation of the Cabinet, bringing about the collapse of the government. It also averted what would have been a bloody confrontation in the streets between Estrada's lumpen hooligan supporters and the anti-Estrada demonstrators.

The pitch battle last Friday on Mendiola between the two groups now tell us that if the police and the troops were more friendly to the pro-Estrada thugs, there would have been bloody battles and anarchy in the streets, inviting a declaration of national emergency. If the thugs had not been restrained and isolated, they could have easily charged at the protesters and engage them in street battles.

The potential for violence was high before the Armed Forces announced their breakaway. Potential flash points developed when protest delegations from the provinces were moving toward Manila. The convoys could have been blocked at the highway points of entry to Manila, provoking clashes between the protesters and the police or soldiers.

Street anarchy

Taking cues from the decisions of the high command to withdraw their support for Estrada, the troops and policemen were able to restrain violence from spreading. The street-wise pro-Estrada people on the streets noticed this. It demoralized them. The defection foreclosed the option of provoking street violence as a step toward escalating government action leading to an emergency proclamation. This was averted.

The decision to withdraw support was a powerful blow to Estrada. He said in interviews he was devastated when General Reyes told him that the military could no longer support his administration.

More bitter was the appearance of Reyes at Edsa, a strong symbolic gesture that identified the military with the civilian movement. Reyes did not have to display guns and tanks. Withdrawal of support by the military and the police, and the resignations of Cabinet members are by no means illegal or unconstitutional. They are a democratic expression of loss of confidence in the national leadership.

Reyes assured Estrada an "exit with dignity." This happened. Estrada did not flee, unlike Marcos. But he refused to sign a resignation letter—a final effort to cast an illegal cloud over Ms Macapagal's accession and to save his macho image.

Play of words

But the fact is he was forced out. Whether one calls it resignation or stepping down is a play of words—a typical Estrada style of prevarication to save face.

Confronted with the collapse of his government, Estrada was humiliated to eat his words. He had vowed he would never resign. After he lost his command of the troops and the support of his Cabinet, he indicated he was willing to quit, saying that provided, "just get me out here alive."

Indeed, on Friday evening, when he was being stubborn in not resigning, the military was considering the option of dragging him out of the Palace—dead or alive. That, too, was averted.

What prompted the decision to swear in Ms Macapagal immediately was the existence of a power vacuum in a transition. Although the military had already removed their loyalty from their former commander in chief, the Armed Forces could not legally take orders from the Vice President until she was sworn in.

Danger signs

A prolonged impasse and a power vacuum were politically dangerous. In that interval, the Armed Forces were in a free-floating agent. They had not legally anchored their loyalty on a new president. They were autonomous and were free to decide things for themselves, especially in case of an outbreak of large-scale violence in the streets, and seize power.

Ms Macapagal's advisers saw this danger. Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and the justices recognized the combustible situation and its political implications for a peaceful transition of power and for preserving democracy. They met early Saturday and unanimously resolved to swear in Ms Macapagal by mid-day.

The most credible institution for legitimacy during that hiatus was the Supreme Court. The initiative of Davide to get an early resolution was an exercise of judicial activism and statesmanship. Still fresh in his mind was the hijack of his option by pro-Estrada senators to issue a ruling on whether to open the second envelope in the impeachment trial. Davide did not want to repeat having missed the opportunity to seize the moment.

The justices found the legal basis for inducting the Vice President in the legal doctrine "*salus populi est suprema lex,*" roughly translated as "the welfare of the people is the supreme law." The justices were not unmindful of the snowballing multitudes massed at Edsa. They took a bold step toward judicial activism to plug the vacuum of the transition being delayed by Estrada, who was negotiating to cling to office for another five days.

Davide redeemed

The resolution redeemed the lapse of the Chief Justice in asserting the option to rule on the envelope issue. It was the final act that persuaded Estrada to leave the Palace quickly. Not only had effective power slipped out of his hands. He was also stripped the mantle of legality and legitimacy by the highest court of the land.

Then, at Edsa, like the archbishop at Reims, Davide swore in Ms Macapagal and bestowed on her the crown of legal legitimacy as the constitutional successor of Estrada, who quibbled over the term "resign" or "step down."

The coronation took place in the assemblage of representatives of state power, the Church, diplomatic corps, and the guarantor of the Constitution, the Armed Forces.

The military integrated itself into the entire apparatus of legitimatization of civil society and the crowds below recognized this when, during the announcement of the military withdrawal from Estrada, they roared "soldiers of the people."

It was easier for the military to cast its lot with the sovereign people massed at Edsa because the succession framework and the democratic institutions were in place, following the democratic restoration under the aegis of the 1987 Constitution.

Right to succession

In 1986, People Power I overthrew not only Marcos but an entire authoritarian structure and system. The line of successor of the old system was blurred. The military is uncomfortable with ambiguity on the issue of its commitment to the Constitution. The high command, this time, recognized Ms Macapagal's right to succession, as much as it had committed to respect the impeachment process.

When Estrada's allies demolished the process through that fateful 11-10 vote in the Senate, they left the people with no recourse to decide on whether the President is guilty or not of the impeachment charges but to go to the streets.

With that vote, followed by the suspension of the trial, the process lost its legitimacy. In going to the streets, the people in effect pronounced Estrada guilty, and they went on to enforce their decision through a coup.

That people's coup was supported by the military, the Supreme Court, civil society and the other political institutions. Estrada had to go.

Time to quit

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

HANG up, not hang on.

That's the call that should be heeded by once-dominant centers Hakeem Olajuwon (Houston) and Patrick Ewing (Seattle), whose skills have significantly diminished this season with advancing age.

Quit while you are ahead. Don't hang on for financial reasons. Consider also your self-respect or pride.

Think of the anguish and shame an over-the-hill, one-time superstar would have to endure when his coach no longer thinks highly of him and often keeps him on the bench.

Several Hall of Famers, in fact, suffered through this humiliating experience—Joe Fulks, Hal Greer, Walt Frazier, Elvin Hayes and Moses Malone.

It is hoped that Olajuwon and Ewing will learn from their sob stories.

Quit the NBA while the quitting is still good.

Alas, word is that Olajuwon and Ewing, both of whom are eligible for free agency in July, are looking to extend their pro careers by signing up for another season or two with their current clubs, if not elsewhere.

Judging by their performance so far this campaign, it is obvious that Olajuwon, who turned 38 last Jan. 21, and Ewing, who will be 39 on Aug. 5, are ripe for retirement.

The constant pounding their bodies took during their glorious days has taken its toll.

Both men have been hounded by various injuries in recent years.

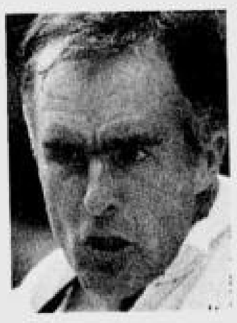
"The Dream," as Hakeem is fondly billed, has lost much of his dazzling spin moves and fancy footwork and his once-deadly fadeaway turnaround jumper no longer strikes fear in the hearts of the opposition.

Ewing, who was traded to Seattle in mid-September last year following 15 seasons in New York, has not fit in well with the Sonics and the club feels inutile without the dominating inside presence he had been known for during his heyday with the Knicks.

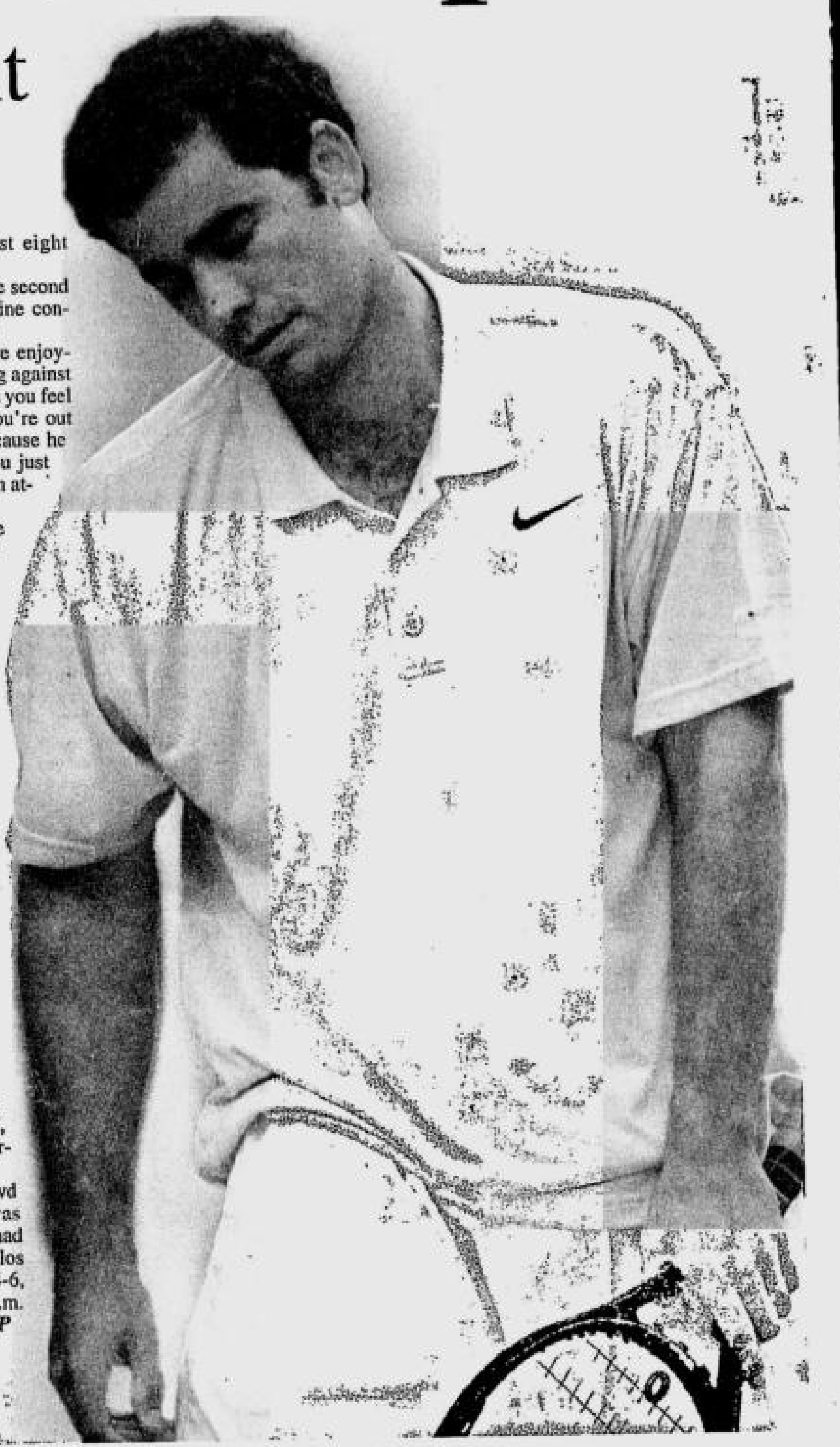
No wonder the Sonics, who were recently bought by an investment group headed by the founding chair of the Seattle-based Starbucks coffee chain, is wary of granting Ewing's request for a two-year contract extension this early. They would rather make the decision at the end of the season for a clearer assessment. And chances are, the new Seattle management won't take the bite.

Martin shocks Sampras

Agassi beats flamboyant foe in Australian Open



MARTIN



SAMPRAS: "It's disappointing."

AP

MELBOURNE, Australia—Pete Sampras couldn't beat Todd Martin 14 times in a row.

Martin upset the No. 3 seed 6-7 (2), 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 in the Australian Open's fourth round Sunday, preventing the anticipated quarterfinal between Sampras and defending champion Andre Agassi.

Agassi's five-set semifinal victory over Sampras was considered the most memorable match of last year's Australian.

Agassi reached the quarters after struggling for a set and a half with the unpredictability of Australian Ilie, whose exuberance and acrobatic shotmaking had the partisan crowd laughing, chanting and sensing an upset. But he rallied for a 6-7 (1), 6-3, 6-0, 6-3 victory.

No. 14 Dominik Hrbaty knocked out No. 2 Marat Safin, the U.S. Open champion. In the quarterfinals, he will meet two-time U.S. Open winner Patrick Rafter, who beat No. 8 Tim Henman 6-2, 6-3, 6-3.

Sampras, who has won 13 Grand Slam tournaments, was 17-2 against Martin before Sunday, and had won their last 13 meetings, going back to 1995.

This time, "I just ran into a hot player," said Sampras, who had been pushed to five sets by Argentina's Juan Ignacio Chela in his previous match.

Martin broke for 5-3 in the second set, 2-1 in the third and 3-2 in the fourth, when he sent shots zipping past the onrushing Sampras on the last three points.

Five games later, he reached match point with a backhand crosscourt touch volley, and then pounded in a serve that Sampras backhanded into the net.

Martin, a U.S. Open finalist in 1999 and semifinalist last year, served 16 aces to 21 by Sampras.

"Todd has got one of the best returns in the game," Sampras said. "He returned serve as well as he ever has. ... I always felt like I was under pressure on my service games."

He added, "It's disappointing and it's not the way I wanted to start the year. It's not like I learned a lesson. I was given a lesson."

Except for the French Open, his notorious weak spot, Sampras has not lost before the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam tournament since the 1997 U.S. Open. He has won seven of the last eight Wimbledons.

Against Ilie, from 3-3 in the second set, No. 6 seed Agassi won nine consecutive games to take control.

"I must say it's much more enjoyable watching him than playing against him," Agassi said. "Sometimes you feel like you're watching when you're out there playing against him, because he really hits some shots that you just can't believe a person can even attempt, let alone make."

The followthrough on one backhand nearly drove Ilie spinning into the ground like a corkscrew. And when he lofted a lob over Agassi on break point for a 2-1 lead in the second set, a jubilant Ilie made a vulgar gesture with his racket _ the sort performed by heavy metal guitarists. The crowd loved it.

In women's matches, No. 4 Monica Seles ended the 13-match winning streak of 18-year-old Justine Henin, rallying from 2-4 in both of the last two sets for a 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 victory.

She advanced to a quarterfinal meeting with No. 12 Jennifer Capriati, who had to come back from 1-5 to win 7-5, 6-1 against Spain's Marta Marrero.

Anna Kournikova reached her first Grand Slam quarterfinal in 3 ½ years by beating Barbara Rittner 6-3, 6-1. The eighth-seeded Kournikova will next play defending champion Lindsay Davenport, who eliminated No. 15 Kim Clijsters 6-4, 6-0.

Kournikova trailed 2-3 in the first set, then held serve in a 24-point game and dominated after that. The showing is her best in a major tournament since Wimbledon in 1997, when she reached the semifinals as a 16-year-old.

Among those in the center court crowd for the first match of the morning was Clijster's boyfriend, Lleyton Hewitt. He had a short night's sleep after losing to Carlos Moya the final match of the third round, 4-6, 6-1, 5-7, 6-2, 7-5, which ended at 1:16 a.m. Sunday. *AP*

Kidd takes timeout

PHOENIX —As he held hands with wife Joumana, Jason Kidd said Saturday that he will not accompany the Phoenix Suns on their upcoming six-game road trip.

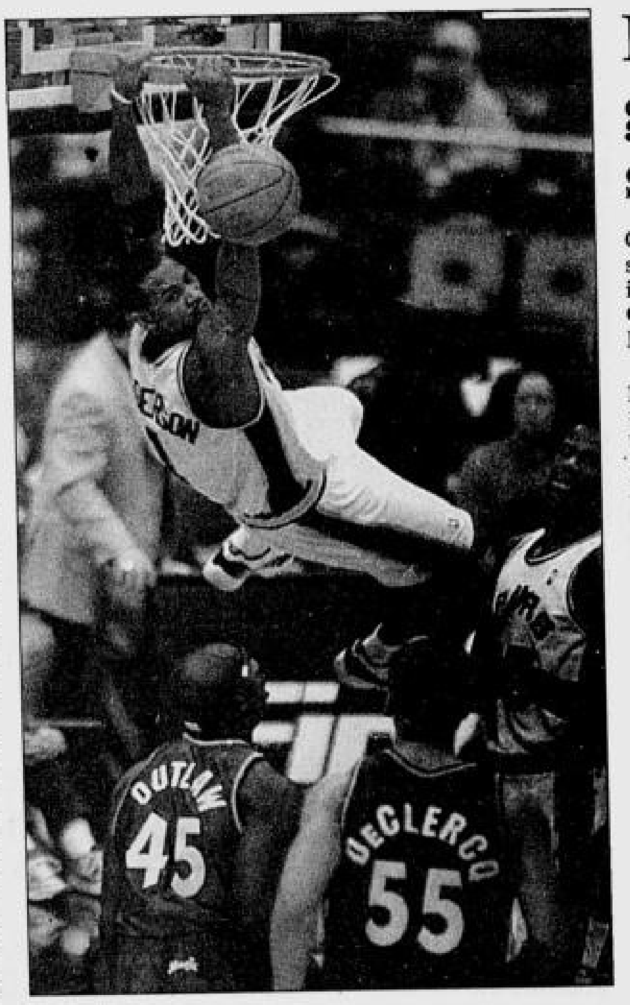
Instead, he said, he will concentrate on mending and strengthening his relationship with her.

Kidd and his wife appeared with their 2-year-old son, T.J., to talk to reporters in the players' family lounge at America West Arena less than 48 hours after he was arrested on a misdemeanor assault charge accusing him of striking his wife.

"Right now, basketball is secondary and my wife and my family, we've made an agreement that I'll return to play basketball," Kidd said, "but right now is not the time to play basketball."

Just an hour or so earlier, Suns coach Scott Skiles said Kidd would make the trip but didn't know when or if the Phoenix star would play. The team left Saturday afternoon for Salt Lake City, where the Suns play Utah on Sunday.

Joumana Kidd said Thursday night's incident might end up helping her family. *AP*



HANG TIME AP

San Antonio Spurs' Derek Anderson hangs from the rim after missing a dunk as Orlando Magic's Bo Outlaw and Andrew DeClercq look on during the first half of their NBA game Saturday in San Antonio. Orlando won, 112-109, in overtime. Yesterday's results: Sacramento 111, Portland 101; New Jersey 123, Chicago 103; Dallas 97, Denver 79; Orlando 112, San Antonio 109, OT.

Rotary tilt gets big support

CALLAWAY has confirmed its sponsorship of the 15th Rotary Golfing Foundation of the Philippines Golf Tournament to be held in Baguio City on Feb. 7-11.

With the P1 million hole-in-one prize from Seaboard Eastern Insurance and the additional raffle items from Callaway, the event will surely elicit excitement from all golfing Rotarians all over the country. Other sponsors include Unilever Phils., Ortigas & Co., Power Golf, PAL, Memzi & Company, Copacobana Apartment, JERM Marketing, Tristan Calixton, Nouveau Manufacturing, Co., Jomon Carpet, EEI Corp., Enriquez Security Services, PET Plans and Smart.

An estimated 300-400 golfers are expected to join the popular event, especially that the RGFFP is now holding its 15th year anniversary.

The Rotary Club of Babumbayan will be sending out five teams while RC Makati-Ayala and RC Pasig will each send at least four teams. Other committed clubs are RC Makati West, RC Quezon City, RC Makati North and RC Manila.

Tournament fee is P5,000 if paid on or before the deadline of Jan. 29 inclusive of two rounds of golf at Camp John Hay and Baguio Country Club, two dinners, giveaways, souvenir program and raffle items.

For payment and registration, interested participants may call the RGFFP secretariat at tel. nos. 721-0564, 721-88-96 and fax no. 721-5940 through Ditas Serapio or Theresa Romero.

Star-studded Shaw golfest at W'Wack

TWO of the country's foremost amateurs, business tycoons and club oldtimers lead a star-studded roster for the 12th Bill Shaw Memorial Golf Classic, the annual member-guest invitational of Wack Wack set Jan. 26-27.

Gerard Cantada and Marlon Dizon; Wack Wack members who both have played for various national teams, have registered their respective tandems like Lucio "Bong" Tan Jr., Cezar Quiambao, Jimmy Tang, Cosco Oben, among others.

Toyota Otis and Toyota Motors Phils. have each donated Echo Verso cars that will be added to the bonanza of hole-in-one prizes. Northwest is giving away tickets to the US while Kymoc and Parform/House of Kangaroo are putting at stake a motorcycle and golf set, respectively.

Wack Wack sports and games chair Tonichi Tuason and vice chair Bones Floro said that the introduction of an 18-hole ladies version will make this year's Bill Shaw different than the previous ones.

The Ladies Bill Shaw featuring spouse dependents and their chosen partners will be held tomorrow, Jan. 23, with a shotgun tee-off at 9 a.m.

The event has drawn the support of Golforce, Tanduay Distillery, Citigold Priority Banking and Omega as major sponsors. The hole sponsors are PCSO, DBP, William Shaw Foundation, Unilever, Ms Saigon, Amanpulo, Discovery Suites, Cong. Gilberto Duavit, PSC, Pacsports, GG&A Clubshares, Philippine Junior Golf Federation, Pyramid Construction, Avesco, Kameraworld, Fortune Tobacco, City Club of Manila, Red Ribbon, Asia Brewery, Citra Metro Tollways, Samsung, Fisherman's Friend, Alternative Beverage, K-Swiss, Fort Bonifacio Dev't, Clear Blue and EruoAsia Marble & Granite.

DUE to the recent turn of political events, the launching of the National Amateur Golf Circuit has been postponed for next month. The seven-leg circuit, sponsored by Titleist and Footjoy, is originally scheduled to start tomorrow at the Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands courses. It will now start at Riviera on Feb. 20-23.

Faxon leads Els by 3 shots

HONOLULU—His third eagle in as many days got Brad Faxon untracked Saturday and allowed him to keep his distance from Ernie Els and Tom Lehman in the Sony Open.

Struggling to save par on his first four holes, Faxon's five-stroke lead had vanished by the time he reached the par-5 ninth. He made a 10-foot eagle putt to restore his cushion, and breezed home for a 3-under 67.

Faxon, trying to become the second straight wire-to-wire winner of the Sony Open, was at 15-under 195 and had a three-stroke lead over Els and Lehman. *AP*

Roligon derby Jan. 25

THE MANAGEMENT of Roligon Mega Cockpit announced yesterday that its 11th anniversary derby will resume on Thursday, Jan. 25.

With this development, all those previously set to fight on Thursday will be accommodated as scheduled while those who were supposed to compete last Saturday and tomorrow, Tuesday, are advised to call the Roligon office so that they will be advised on their new schedule.

"We had to postpone the fights last Saturday because of the political crisis, but now that things have settled down, we feel that we owe it to our customers to continue with the derby," RMC head Rolando Luzong stated.

Submission of weights for Thursday's tussle is set for Wednesday, Jan. 24.

After two days of elimination only five entries remain undefeated with three points apiece. These are Pol Estrellado (Jason Kid I Spider, Glen Ayangco—TNT Bayong-I, Rolly Liboro (RZL), Anthony Garcia (AG Polo) and lawyer Rudy Salud (Winning Time DVH).

La Salle meet up

THE LA Salle Green Hills Alumni Association will be hosting the 9th Drive for Cause Golf Tournament on Jan. 29 at the Forest Hills Golf and Country Club in Antipolo City. Tee-off time is at 7 a.m.

Awardings will be held at the La Salle Green Hills Alumni Homecoming on Sat., Feb. 3, hosted by the silver jubilarian High School Class '76.

For more information, please call Ms. Ludie Bautista at tel. #721-2729. The tournament is sponsored by Union Bank Visa and Smart Communications, Inc.

Pasay's 4WD racing festival a huge success

DY

THE CHAMPIONSHIP competition of the Pasay Inter-Barangay 4WD Racing Festival held at the PCC Compound on Libertad Street was a huge success.

No less than Pasay City councilor and civic leader Connie Dy graced the affair during which she underscored the importance of sports, physical fitness program, job fair and livelihood among the youth.

"Aside from sports activities like this, I am also spearheading other projects, like the citywide job fair from Feb. 17 to March 3, which aims to provide work opportunities to deserving constituents," Dy said.

Dy is reportedly being groomed to run as congresswoman in the city's lone congressional district, with the full backing of Lakas titular head President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

2 world champions draw

WIJK AAN ZEE, Netherlands—A seesaw battle between the two rival world chess champions, Vladimir Kramnik of Russia and Viswanathan Anand of India, ended in a draw Saturday in round six of the Corus Chess tournament. This is the pair's first meeting since each won his title late last year.

Brain Games champion Kramnik had the white pieces against Anand, the FIDE champion. Anand followed Garry Kasparov's play in the Nimzo-Indian Defense from game 12 of last year's championship. *AP*

What now PSC, GAB?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

WHO will be the new faces of the Philippine Sports Commission? Or, for that matter, the Games and Amusements Board?

Following the historic change in the government, many have been asking: Who'll replace PSC chair Carlos "Butch" Tuason and the PSC board once they step down? Who'll replace GAB chair Dominador Cepeda Jr. and his commissioners?

Of course, it's too early to tell or to even hazard a guess. But I'm pretty sure that there will be changes. Pretty soon.

In the meantime, let's discuss briefly the PSC affair.

Created in April 1990, the PSC has not left large footprints on the sporting scene since its creation and, through the years, remembered more for its failures than its successes.

Except in 1991 when Manila hosted the Soputheast Asian Games where the Philippines placed a mighty second behind overall champion Indonesia by a single gold medal, the years between 1990 and up to 2000 have been one big letdown for local sports.

Methinks PSC officials, apart from being perennially locked in bitter conflict and insensitive to the welfare of the athletes and the media people, are lacking in transparency and *delicadeza*. My view is that these officials have little to show in the way of performance, except for the fact that they travel very often using public funds.

In these hard times, PSC officials should lead by example as expounded by new President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. For starters, they should conserve precious dollars by staying home instead of joining the trip to the SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur this September because as I have stressed before they have no personality whatsoever in any athletic event under the aegis of the International Olympic Committee. I pray the new PSC leadership will listen this time.

In addition, I am relaying to the new PSC administration this unsolicited pieces of advice:

1. The PSC should respect the autonomy of the National Sports Associations and, being a major source of funding of the NSAs, it should not extend financial assistances to the NSA not functioning efficiently.
2. PSC officials should be men and women of good moral character and should serve as role models.
3. The PSC should encourage the promotion of a mass-based program in both the government and private sectors starting with the barangay level, and
4. PSC officials should ask God for help in the performance of their duties. With God, nothing is impossible.

Unbeaten RP pug eyes OPBF title

REV Santillan of the Philippines, who has won all his 10 fights via knockout, goes for the Orient Pacific Boxing Federation crown against Sukhyun Yun of South Korea at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu on Friday, Jan. 26. The 12-round mainer topbills Rex Wakee Salud's stellar card which also features two Philippine championship bouts.

SPORTS
AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▪ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

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TENNIS: Australian Open, Elimination Round at 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. (2 p.m.) on Sky Cable 17
WTA Adidas International, Semifinals at 9:30 p.m. (r- tomorrow at 2:30 a.m.) on Star Sports
BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Louisville Cardinals vs Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles at 8 a.m. (r- tomorrow at 3 a.m.), Duke Blue Devils vs Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets at 4:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN
BILLIARDS: 2000 WPBA Classic Tour, Semifinal #2 at 10 a.m. on ESPN
AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Super Bowl XXVIII Highlights -Dallas Cowboys vs Buffalo Bills (r) at 4 p.m.
BOXING: Friday Night Fights at 10 p.m. on ESPN
SWIMMING: World Cup (Melbourne) Highlights at 12:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
VOLLEYBALL: Women's Big Ten Volleyball - Indiana vs Ohio State at 11 a.m. (r) on ESPN

Batang Pinoy on

Laguna begins defense

By June Navarro

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Defying the major hitches it suffered last year, the second edition of the Philippine National Youth Games-Batang Pinoy Championships finally took off yesterday amid a tranquil political atmosphere at the San Luis Recreational Educational and Sports Village here.

Over 3,500 athletes from across the nation, a handful of whom are expected to be future sporting figures, took time out to compete in 16 disciplines as local sports officials started a major facelift on the sagging image of sports in the country.

Lured by colorful presentations performed by a multitude of students, the Games designed for 12 years old and below drew tremendous following from the host town as Laguna starts today defense of the overall crown it won in 1999, the Games' initial staging.

Due to natural calamities such as typhoons, the nationwide sporting conclave was shelved twice last year.

Laguna Gov. Joey Lina, who saved its staging from another postponement by offering his province, urged the youth to join hands and forget a dark past in the aftermath of a political crisis that rocked the nation in his inspirational talk.

On Saturday, former President Joseph Estrada was ousted by another people power revolt, installing erstwhile Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as the 14th Chief Executive of the country.

Chair Carlos Tuason of the Philippine Sports Commission delivered the keynote address. PSC commissioner William Ramirez, overall director of the event, was also present.

Tuason told the INQUIRER on Saturday that until newly installed President Macapagal issues a directive urging them to step down from their respective positions, he and his commissioners will just continue to do their jobs.

"There is still work to do. You cannot just abandon your job without a smooth turnover," said Tuason.

Laguna has the largest number of athletes entered with 173 participants followed by Negros Occidental and Sultan Kudarat with 144 and 126 competitors, respectively.

Events on tap today are athletics, badminton, boxing, chess, cycling, football, karatedo, little league baseball and softball, table tennis, lawn tennis and volleyball.

Medal-rich taekwondo and swimming, where the hosts etched their mark, will not be played until Wednesday. Gymnastics, judo and arnis will be played on the second day of competitions.

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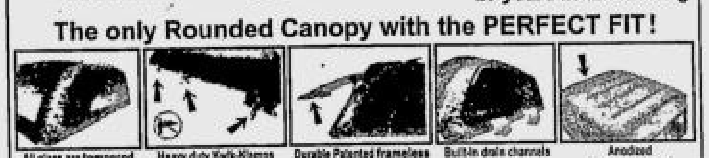

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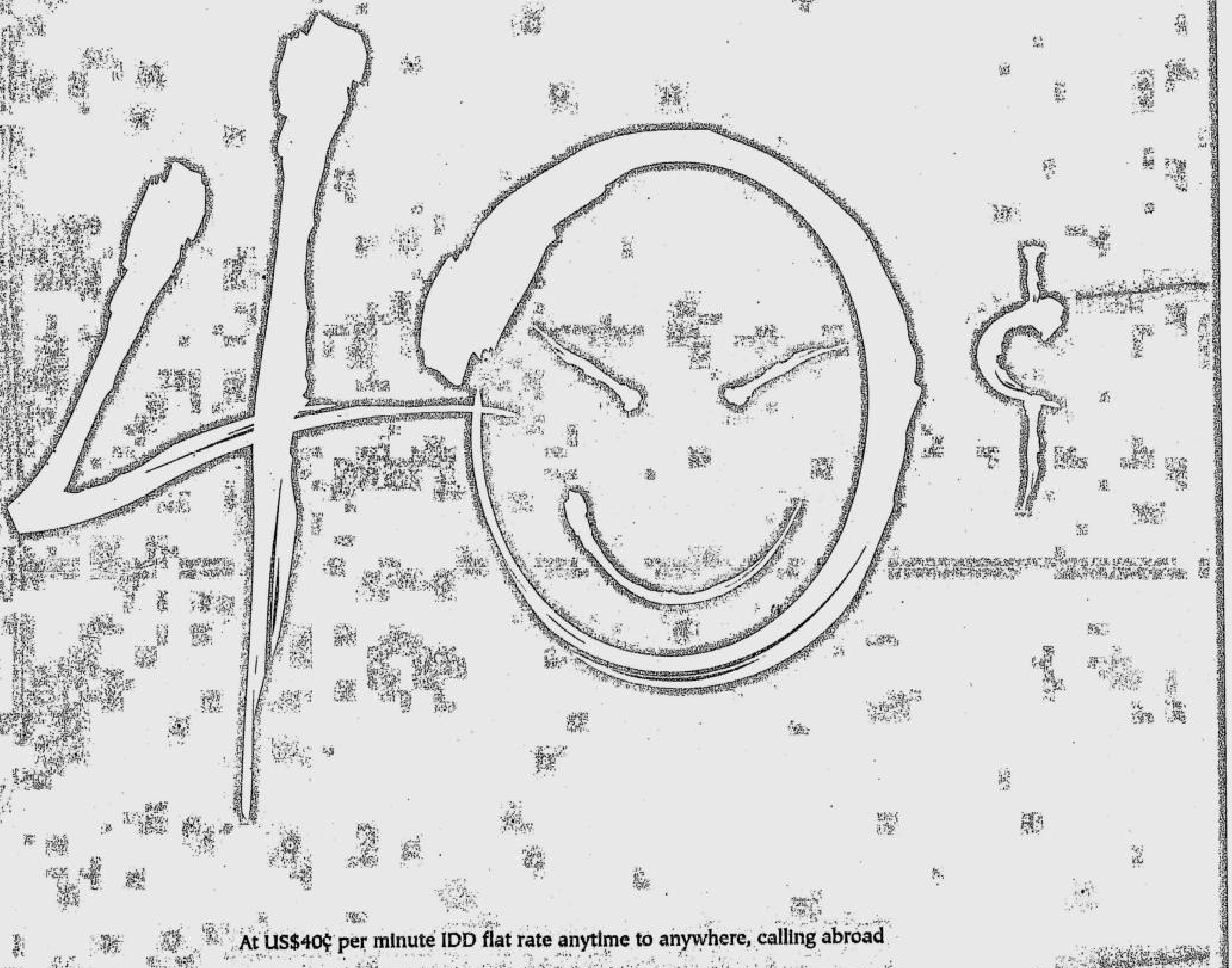

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Jinggoy, JV may still run in May polls

BY AGNES E. DONATO

EVEN when their father is no longer the President, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada and half-brother Jose Victor "JV" Ejercito would not be ending their political careers just yet.

On Saturday, just a few hours after the Estrada family departed from Malacañang for the last time, Jinggoy said he might run for Congress instead of his original plan to seek a Senate seat.

JV, the former President's only child by former movie starlet Guia Gomez, is said to be eyeing the San Juan mayoralty that Jinggoy will be vacating.

Appearing defeated on Saturday, Jinggoy told media people he has yet to make up his mind.

"As of now, it is still very difficult for me to announce any definite political plans," he said. The only thing I am considering right now is to make a three-cornered congressional fight in San Juan."

With this announcement, he also abandoned plans of following the footsteps of his deposed father, who held the San Juan mayor's office for two decades and was elected senator and then vice president before rising to his short-lived presidency.

In the congressional race, Jinggoy would be facing incumbent Rep. Jose Mari Gonzalez and former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora, both known to be close friends of the Estrada family.

Earlier, sources close to Jinggoy said he was waiting for the result of the impeachment trial before he would decide which position to seek in the elections. He was said to have planned to file his candidacy at the last minute before the Feb. 12 deadline.

Sources said Jinggoy would be supporting his half-brother JV's bid for the mayor's post in San Juan.

The half-brothers were once estranged but apparently resolved their differences during the darkest days of their father's presidency. This leaves incumbent San Juan Vice Mayor Philip Cesar, a former basketball star, out in the cold as

JINGGOY, JV/A26

JINGGOY ESTRADA

JV ESTRADA

Text power in Edsa 2001

BY LEAH SALTERIO

WITHIN an hour of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's presidency, countless mobile phones were buzzing and ringing and vibrating with the latest in text messages.

"This is for the record," one such text message said as soon as Macapagal was sworn in as the country's 14th president. "On Jan. 20, 2001 in the Philippines and the United States, the new presidents will be sworn in, both children of former presidents and both taking over from womanizers."

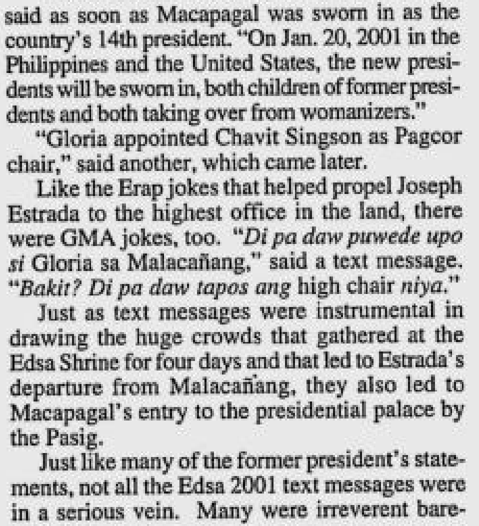
"Gloria appointed Chavit Singson as Pagcor chair," said another, which came later.

Like the Erap jokes that helped propel Joseph Estrada to the highest office in the land, there were GMA jokes, too. "*Di pa daw puwede upo si* Gloria sa Malacañang," said a text message. "*Bakit? Di pa daw tapos ang* high chair *niya*."

Just as text messages were instrumental in drawing the huge crowds that gathered at the Edsa Shrine for four days and that led to Estrada's departure from Malacañang, they also led to Macapagal's entry to the presidential palace by the Pasig.

Just like many of the former president's statements, not all the Edsa 2001 text messages were in a serious vein. Many were irreverent barefaced jokes, often obscene.

TEXT POWER/A27



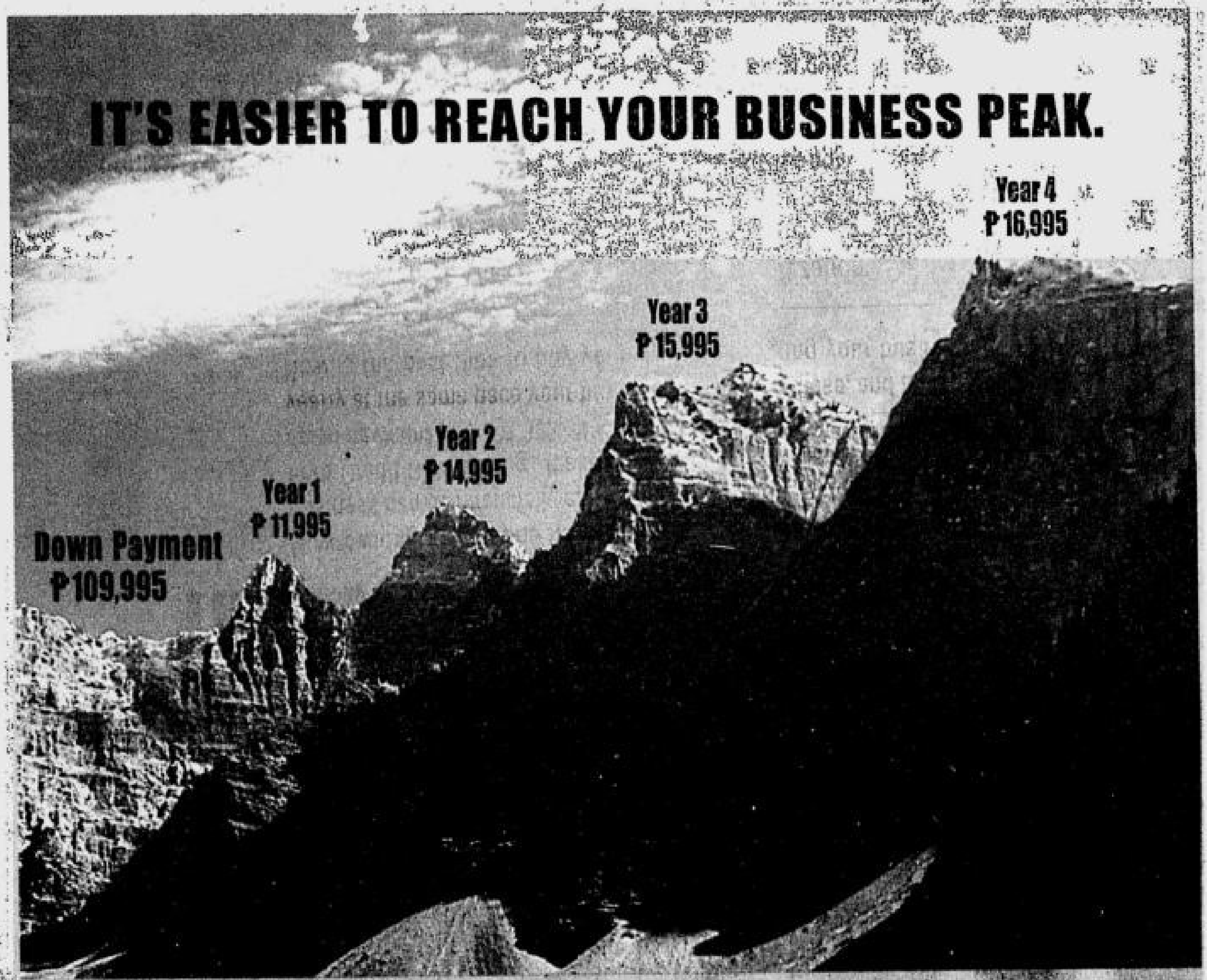
DIVINE Mary Kaye, 7, knows her life is uncertain, her parents say. JOAN BONDOC

Leukemia girl wants to know what God plans for her

DIVINE MARY "Kaye" Tabian was 5 years old when she was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, cancer of the blood, in 1999.

It is almost obscene for a child with a supernatural-sounding name to be afflicted with such a terrible disease. But the pretty daughter of Virginita Tabian and Nolly del Mundo wants more out of life than lying on a hospital bed worrying about when her time will come.

LEUKEMIA/A26



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Dumping near Pinatubo could trigger another eruption, warn green groups

By Jun Malig
PDI Central Luzon Desk

ANGELES CITY—Dumping Metro Manila's trash near Mt. Pinatubo could lead to another eruption of the volcano once the methane gas produced by the waste seeps into the volcano's lava and magma deposits.

Environmental groups in Pampanga made this warning after former President Estrada's Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara last week revealed plans of making Crow Valley at the sub-zone area of the Clark Field Special Economic Zone in Capas, Tarlac an alternative dump for Metro Manila's trash.

Pinatubo is in Zambales province but its eruptions affect the adjoining provinces of Pampanga and Tarlac.

The Citizens Council for Trade and Tourism (CCTT), the Pinoy Gumising Ka Movement (PGKM) and the environmental group Damayan on Monday vowed to oppose the plan.

Ruperto Cruz, chair of both the CCTT and PGKM, said even a landfill with sufficient facilities, if located near Mt. Pinatubo, would not be advisable because Pampanga and Tarlac are earthquake-prone areas.

"The plastic lining of the landfill would crack in case of an earthquake," Cruz warned. "The methane build-up underneath the tons of garbage would seep into the (pyroclastic) deposit of Pinatubo and could result in another eruption."

He said Pampanga and Tarlac residents want Mt. Pinatubo and its environs to become a tourist destination, not a garbage dump for Metro Manila.

Last Monday, Col. Edgar Calvo, 600th Air Base Wing commander of the Philippine Air Force, brought the Inquirer and three other reporters on board a helicopter for an aerial view of Crow Valley to show that the area is not suitable as a garbage dump.

Calvo explained that the rains and the river would only sweep the garbage toward other parts of Tarlac.

The villages along Crow Valley, especially Barangay Sta. Juliana, are being used as jump-off points for Pinatubo treks. From Sta. Juliana, trekkers need only about three hours to reach the volcano crater.

Cruz said Malacañang should not solve Metro Manila's garbage problem at the expense of Pampanga and Tarlac people.

"If they cannot solve their garbage problem, they should not give the problem to us," he said.

Edsa volunteer dies

A VOLUNTEER became the sole casualty of People Power II on Saturday.

Victor Jongko appeared to have suffered a heart attack while watching television at the secretariat/press lounge of the Edsa Shrine at about 3 a.m. Saturday.

Jongko was said to be watching a GMA 7 interview with lawyer Hernani Perez, one of four emissaries sent to Malacañang to convince former President Estrada to step down.

Jongko reportedly collapsed right after he watched the interview.

Doctors at the Edsa Shrine administered cardio-pulmonary resuscitation before they brought Jongko to an ambulance to take him to Medical City.

The man died on the way.

Quezon City barangay official Martin Dino rushed to the Edsa Shrine when he heard Jongko had collapsed.

Dino said Jongko was a businessman engaged in buying and selling cars. He was also a secretary of the Rotary Club of San Francisco Del Monte and an active member of Couples for Christ although he was not married.

"Vic was a dedicated worker of the Catholic Church and was known to volunteer for good causes," Dino said.

According to other Edsa volunteers, Jongko had been faithfully attending the demonstrations and working long hours for the past four days.

"We just knew him by face," one volunteer said. "He'd be here early and would leave late. The stress may have been too much for him."

The volunteer said Jongko had been assisting performers appearing at the rally. *Rocky Nazareno*

Mapua is 76

MAPUA Institute of Technology celebrates its 76th anniversary today.

Established in 1925 by Don Tomas Mapua, the school is now a member of the respected Yuchengco Group of Companies. Former Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco chairs its board of trustees.

Mapua Tech president Dr. Reynaldo Vea says "our school is all-powered to expand in the new millennium not only to remain as one of Asia's best engineering schools, but more important, to become the country's new center of learning in computer and information technology."

Mapua graduates have a track record of topping the engineering board examinations since the 1930s.

The weeklong anniversary celebration will coincide with the launching of the Mapua Tech web page (www.mapua tech.edu.ph) and the first Mapua Technofair which highlights Mapua students' and other activities including the technology Olympiad, research competitions, student forum, concerts and fun games.

The 76th anniversary celebration will last until Jan. 27, 2001.

Pictures that made Edsa happen again

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

NO NEED to open the envelope. The evidence, your Honor, is there for the world to see. It's no secret what the Filipino can do. He has just toppled another hated leader with a swirling but bloodless revolt.

The feat was truly incredible for a hardy breed that has obviously forgotten how to use the garbage can.

But the ouster of Erap Estrada clearly demonstrated that the Filipino was just reserving all his energy and talent to dump the biggest trash of them all.

With the shrieks and flashes of that amazing weekend dancing in his mind, the Filipino woke up to a crisp, chilly morning yesterday wondering if this was not another Christmas season that he was welcoming.

He was not unlike a young man who was astounded by his own great voice.

But, after having helped create an even better replica of the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolt, it goes without saying that the Filipino now knows he can do it again, just in case.

* * *

There were prayers and high hopes as your reporter here, his arthritic right knee miraculously healed, finally managed to march to Edsa and hear Cardinal Sin's afternoon Mass on Thursday.

Speculations flew thick. Self-acclaimed wise men insisted that a charismatic head was vital to lead the revolting mass in toppling Erap Estrada. Others felt that either a military element, or hopefully, a direct intervention from Washington as had been done in the case of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, would be the deciding factor.

Naturally, they continued to wonder how the Filipino had succeeded in completing another legendary event that has sent the whole world applauding again.

Look, we may never win an Olympic gold medal in this lifetime, but those two successful bloodless uprisings—Edsa People Power 1 and 2—would remain the envy of even the greatest sports powers.

* * *

How did the Pinoy do it again?

There would be numerous theories. But, who knows, it could actually be the inborn appetite of the Filipino for the melodramatic.

Allow me to suggest, your Honor, that an unforgettable tearjerker ultimately fueled the rage that sent people out, shrieking and screaming, against the perceived, televised misdeeds of the deposed regime.

In the first place, if there was a thing that had irretrievably outraged the *masa*, it was nothing else but the contrasting pictures of Loren Legarda and Tessie Aquino-Oreta down at the Senate hall on Tuesday evening.

As Senator Legarda wept to somewhat resemble Christ's Mother at the foot of the Cross, Ninoy Aquino's youngest sister all but disrobed, shrieked and gyrated, as she wantonly celebrated the decision to keep the vital impeachment envelope sealed.

* * *

On Friday evening, with the happy, expectant multitude already swimming in the euphoria following the withdrawal of military support from the Estrada administration, I talked to people at Edsa to confirm my suspicion.

No need to ask Nora Aunor herself. She had confided that she got irrevocably incensed at the contrasting scenes at the Senate hall on Tuesday evening.

Yes, respondents would nod as one and say it was that mindless sexy dance by Tessie Oreta that sent them jumping on their feet and running to Edsa.

Maybe this need not be told but, now that the peaceful revolt has succeeded, there are also those who felt thankful for the 11 senators who ganged up on truth and voted to keep that mysterious vital envelope sealed.

If not for the treacherous act, respondents agreed, the street protest would have not been galvanized.

* * *

The magnitude of that No vote by the 11 pro-Estrada senators jolted and awakened everybody like an unmasking earthquake.

There instantly was a thirsting cry for truth and justice.

In fact, a contrite Kit Tatad, after realizing what he had done, wasted no time and bought full-page ads in the major dailies to call on Erap Estrada to step down.

The ads, worth a fortune, were however made into placards at Edsa but with a bitter twist: The senator from Catanduanes, his face crossed out, was labeled a *hunyango*, or chameleon, an ugly reptile that changes color to suit its appetite.

Former basketball star Robert Jaworski, accompanied by Tingting Cojuangco, made the silly decision of moving through the Edsa multitude on Friday, and was brutally heckled.

There were reports Jaworski got shoved, pelted with debris and empty plastic bottles and had to get back and abandon his wish of going up the stage.

* * *

And Tessie Oreta? Well, she would have been lynched out there.

In fact, the favorite poster at Edsa following the dirty No vote by the Senate was that of Aquino-Oreta nearly naked and proclaimed a *pokpok*, national whore.

Thank you very much, your Honor, that picture of you swearing in our new President, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, will be framed in history.

Actually, there are those who claim that, just like with Ferdinand Edralin Marcos, Joseph Ejercito Estrada fell a victim of people around him.

Our previous president, it was offered, was too loving and kind to friends.

As the curtains fell on the Erap Impeachment theater, though, nobody should be kinder to the Filipino than the Filipino himself.

He did make that Edsa miracle happen again. He can lick his bad ways and manners.

Jinggoy, JV may still run

(From page A25)

Jinggoy could only support one bet.

Last Dec. 31, the local chapter of the Estrada-formed Partido ng Masang Pilipino selected incumbent Councilor Edgar Soriano to be JV's running mate.

The party had also filled most of the slots for San Juan councilor. The list includes Christopher Torzar, Domingo Sese, Angelino Mendoza, Dante Santiago and Roberto Zaragosa for District I.

For the second district, the party's bets are Anthony Carballo, Grace Cortez, Francis Peralta, Rolando Bernardo and Clemente Vargas.

Edu 'blinded by ambition,' says Liga

MAKATI barangay leaders would be filing charges against Vice Mayo Edu Manzano for what they said was his deliberate refusal to sign the city budget for 2001.

The Liga ng mga Barangay accused Manzano of dereliction of duty for having abandoned his ministerial function to sign ordinances approved by the city council as required by the Local Government Code.

The barangay league said it would also charge Manzano with grave abuse of authority for insisting he has the authority to review all ordinances approved by the council. The Local Government Code does not give the vice mayor such an authority, the Liga said.

The Makati Clubs, Restaurants and Entertainment Association (Macrea) also assailed Manzano for sitting on the city budget, according to the Liga.

Liga president Rodolfo Sese said Makati businessmen and establishment owners have been calling the attention of barangay leaders and city officials on the effects of Manzano's action on their business.

"Sadly, we cannot assure them that we can provide the same services because we have no budget," Sese said. "The vice mayor is damaging the image of Makati and causing anxiety within the business community."

Sese said that by sitting on the budget Manzano is hurting the people of Makati, not his perceived political enemies.

"He is hurting particularly the poor families who rely heavily on the free medicine, school supplies, financial assistance and other services of the city government," Sese said.

Manzano would be running for mayor against Metro Manila Development Authority chair Jejomar C. Binay in the May elections.

Lawyers for the Liga officers are studying whether to file the charges before the Department of Interior and Local Government or the courts.

"The refusal of Vice Mayor Manzano to sign the budget has no basis in law and in fact," said Sese, barangay chair of Guadalupe Nuevo.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, January 22, 2001
3rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: *Heb 9:15, 24-28*
Gospel: *Mk 3:22-30*

The teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul: the chief of the demons helps him to drive out demons."

Jesus called them to him and began teaching them by means of stories or parables, "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a nation is divided by civil war, that nation cannot stand. If a family divides itself into groups, that family will not survive. In the same way, if Satan has risen against himself and is divided, he will not stand; he is finished. No one can break into the house of the Strong one in order to plunder his goods, unless he first ties up the Strong one. Then indeed, he can plunder his house.

Truly, I say to you, every sin will be forgiven humankind, even insults to God, however numerous. But whoever slanders the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven: he carries the guilt of his sin forever."

This was their sin when they said, "He has an evil spirit in him."

Commentary

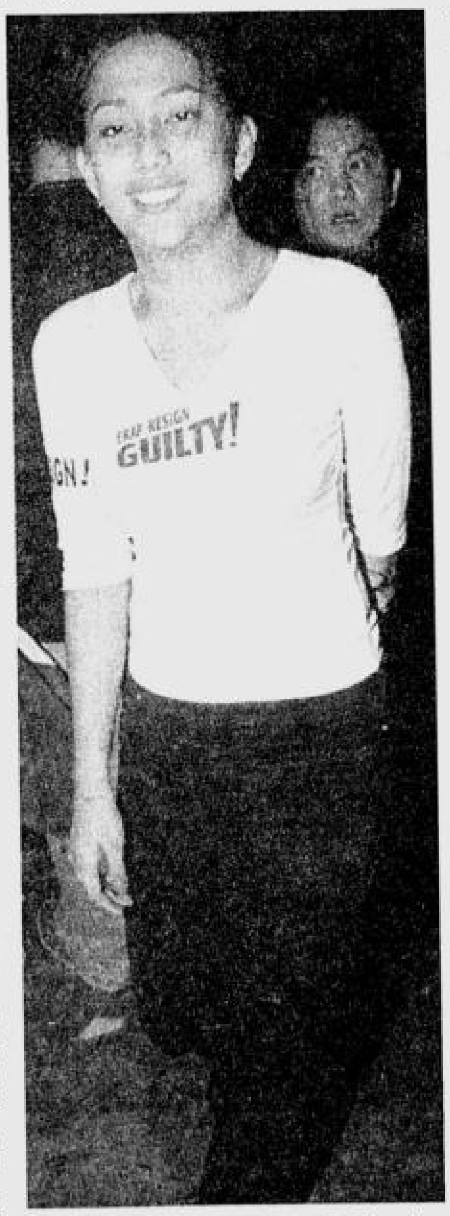
Undiscerning people cannot distinguish between good and evil. These are the type who will be divided within themselves like the "kingdom divided against itself" that Jesus here is talking about. They cannot stand because they are incapable of making decisions. They cannot make up their minds. Indecisiveness is a curse. It is one of the clearest marks of immaturity that is most easily observed, for instance, in people who cannot last in a job or a relationship, who fly around like butterflies, always considering different options, always keeping so many other doors open even when they've already entered one. They keep "playing safe" but they never get to commit themselves.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., U.P. Village, Diliman, Quezon City, U.P. P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Website: http://www.cnl.net/claret

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRACTS)—Novation—Novation of a contract is never presumed. It has been held that "in the absence of an express agreement, novation takes place only when the old and the new obligations are incompatible on every point." Indeed, the following requisites must be established: (1) there is a previous valid obligation; (2) the parties concerned agree to a new contract: (3) the old contract is extinguished; and (4) there is a valid new contract. The requisites of novation are present in this case. The 1989 Loan Agreement extinguished the obligation obtained under the 1987 credit accommodation. This is evident from its explicit provision to "liquidate" the principal and the interest of the earlier indebtedness. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Panganiban, Third Division, Security Bank and Trust Company, Inc. v. Cuenca, G.R. No. 138544, October 3, 2000].

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA



ANOTHER Estrada child, JR Ejercito, joins the resignation call at the Edsa Shrine. MIKE ALQUINTO

AHS Class '55 reunion set

PREPARATIONS have been finalized for the grand reunion of Arellano High School Class '55 members on Saturday, Jan. 27, at the school quadrangle on Teodora Alonzo Street in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

The reunion will be from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., said chief organizer Jimmy Ladao. Raffle prizes will be given away.

All Class '55 graduates are enjoined to attend. For tickets, they may contact Ladao or Maricel Bondoc at 896-72-75, 897-25-70 and 897-40-20 and 21.

Leukemia girl wants . . .

(From page A25)

Virginita, 27, said Kaye, now 7, is like most little girls. She loves fried chicken and is fond of playing with stuffed toys. Her favorite toy is a doctor play kit, perhaps because she is so used to seeing them.

Her mother said Kaye hopes to become a doctor some day.

In May 1999, Kaye was asked to participate in a Santacruzan. Her family did not know then that Kaye already had cancer symptoms, like splotches on her skin that wouldn't go away.

She was so excited to join the Santacruzan that Kaye told her mother she hoped to do it again some day. But a few months later, in July, doctors found she had blood dyscrasia, pneumonia, candidiasis and acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

In September 1999, Kaye was confined at the Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation (formerly FEU Hospital) in Sampaloc, Manila.

She underwent chemotherapy, which cost her family P8,000 to P10,000 a week, excluding expenses for medicines and laboratory tests. She recovered and, for almost two years, the disease was in remission.

But last Dec. 21, she was stricken with exudative tonsillopharyngitis—a serious infection where pus oozes in the throat—and had to be taken to the hospital again.

Doctors fear she might suffer a relapse because of the infection.

Since then, she has been confined at the Far Eastern University NRMF Hospital in Fairview, Quezon City.

Virginita was in a dilemma for she had just given birth to her second daughter, Jazzen, on Dec. 14. A week after giving birth, Virginita went right back to the hospital to look after Kaye.

Virginita could not nurse her newborn because of Kaye. Nolly's septuagenarian parents are now the ones taking care of Jazzen.

But three weeks into Kaye's confinement, Jazzen was injured. Virginita had to leave Kaye's side to tend to the baby. Nolly took over her place beside Kaye.

But Nolly, a farmer, couldn't afford to be at the hospital for long. He has to tend to a small patch of land he owns outside Alfonso town in Cavite.

The Tabians are now deep in debt. The couple can no longer afford the cost of medicines. They don't know where to turn to. Kaye's medicines now cost P3,000 a day, apart from laboratory and hospital expenses.

Some days, Virginita or Nolly have nothing to eat because they use all their money to buy medicine. And there's no one to bring them food from Cavite.

"We can't even buy food nor pay for our fare to the hospital from Cavite," Virginita said in Filipino. She has been asking for help from charitable people and institutions, but the aid came in very slow trickles.

Doctors have not determined whether Kaye has suffered a relapse. They would know for sure once they have extracted bone marrow from her. But they could not do this because she is still weak from the infection.

"Her doctors, Ma. Francia Hermoso and Jasmin Claire Manag, believe that a girl of Kaye's age stands a good chance of survival, so long as she continues taking her medication and chemotherapy treatment, and if she does not suffer from another serious infection," Virginita said.

"Kaye knows that anytime she may. . . " Virginita meant to say "die," but couldn't bring herself to say it.

"She has already accepted that," she added. "She is aware of her condition. But sometimes she could not help but ask why she is being tested, what God has in mind for her. All I could do is tell her that no one knows for sure."

She said her daughter, although she admits to being scared, wants to fight the cancer. "She wants so much to keep on living," Virginita said.

Those who wish to help Kaye may get in touch with her parents at the FEU NRMF Hospital, 751-46-95 or 427-02-16 local 5002, or at the Tabian residence in Sta. Teresa, Alfonso, Cavite, 4123.

Eric Olona

Text power 2001

(From page A25)

"'*Yan, tignan niyo, wala na tayo* Erap joke. *'Di ba ang lungkot at tahimik na ang* cel *natin*? Next week *mag*-rally *tayo para ibalik si* Erap."

The power of text messages shone after the 11 senators voted against the opening of the envelope containing Equitable-PCI Bank records of the Jose Velarde account.

"A long lost friend died. He got 11 stab wounds and not even 10 competent doctors could save him. His name is Democracy. Please pray for his killers."

"Let the funeral bells toll because Philippine democracy died last night. Let's all pray for our country and never cease trusting the Lord."

> Just as text messages were instrumental in drawing the huge crowds that gathered at the Edsa Shrine for four days and that led to Estrada's departure from Malacañang, they also led to Macapagal's entry to the presidential palace by the Pasig.

Text messages also helped spread the new acronym, "Joe's Cohorts," using the initials of the infamous 11.

"*Tsk, tsk, tsk. Mabuti pa sa* Bible, 12 *ang apostol, isa lang ang Hudas. Kawawang 'Pinas. Sa* impeachment court, *isa lang ang apostol, pero* 11 *ang Hudas*."

"*Ayan, sige, bumoto ka pa ng basketbolista, artista, matandang laging tulog sa* trial, *luka-luka, taga* 'Eat Bulaga,' *bading at sangkatutak na bobo at sakim. Ulit ka pa?*"

It didn't take a genius to correctly match the description to the senator.

One message must have required a lot of research and networking. It gave away the mobile phone numbers of some senators Jaworski, Enrile, Coseteng, Sotto, Honasan, and Tatad. The message concluded: "Text them your indignation. Please pass."

A graphic message shows a dirty finger, obviously for the 11 senators.

Another graphic message shows a man pacing back and forth with text that says, "*Di ako mapakali, gusto ko patay* 11 senators."

While "heroes" popped up quicker than in a child's pop-up book, their opposites fell just as quickly, the biggest of them being the dancing Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta. The sister of the late Sen. Benigno Aquino Sr. became a "superstar" in the texting world.

"Advisory to Aquino family: To continue the legacy of Aquinos, we're offering the life of another Aquino for the sake of all Filipinos. . ." Guess whose the texters offer to give up.

"*Para magsimula ang* People Power 2, *kailangan may mamatay uli na* Aquino. . ." Guess again who they want dead.

"What Erap can give that Ninoy can't give to sister Tessie... millions of pesos. Please pass it on until it reaches Ninoy in heaven. Amen."

"Ninoy said the Filipino is worth dying for. His sister is worth killing for."

"Charlene Gonzales dethroned as the 'Dancing Queen.' The new one is Tessie Oreta. Watch her new segment when the trial continues on 'Dancetime with Tessie.'"

"Maribeth Bichara resigned from 'Keep on Dancing.' She will be replaced by Tessie Oreta."

"News flash: The senate just elected Tessie Oreta as the new majority floor cheerleader."

The other names are either unprintable.

Also circulated were Oreta's alleged phone numbers, including fax, and home address in Makati City.

One message said, "I called Tessie Oreta's cell and it says, 'The subscriber is now very rich!' Huh?" It was an apparent play-on-word reference to the taped message heard when cell phones are busy, "The subscriber cannot be reached."

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago, too, became the butt of very cruel jokes after she threw out three spectators during the Estrada impeachment trial at the Senate.

Among the "kind" Miriam jokes:

"Miriam to Roco: If you were my husband, I would poison your drink. Roco to Miriam: If you were my wife, I would drink it."

"Legal terms: duces tecum—documentary evidence; ad testificandum—witness as summoned; factum probandum—proven fact; imfacta sanitarium —Miriam in court."

The other key personalities in the impeachment trial, whether the senator judges, the prosecutors or the witnesses, were not spared by the text brigade.

"Jobs available at impeachment trial: Hairstylist for Mendoza, psychiatrist for Miriam, anger management therapist for Enrile, textmate for Oreta and dream analyst for Revilla."

"Lucio Tan, 25% Filipino, 75% Chinese; Erap, 30% Filipino, 70% alcohol; Ernie Maceda and John Osmeña, 50% Filipino, 50% Filipina; Miriam Santiago, 100% Flip Na."

"Members of Sia family: Miriam—Sia Praning, Mendoza—Sia Bu King, Osmeña–Sia Ba Ding, Jinggoy—Sia Pan Dak, Erap—Sia Man Yak.

"Let's hit Enrile where it hurts. Boycott Mr. Donut, Pizza Hut, Tequila Joe's."

"*Kung makikita mong nalulunod si* Senator Oreta *at* Senator Santiago *at meron kang* choice, *ano ang pipiliin mo? Manonood ng sine o kakain ka sa* Jollibee?"

The text troop, too, knew what was inside the envelope: "Grades *ni* Erap *sa* Ateneo, picture *ni* John Osmeña *na naka*-two-piece *at* file ni Miriam *sa* mental. *Kaya ayaw buksan.*"

"*Kaya hindi sila pumayag buksan ang second envelope, galing daw ito kay* Lolit Solis," referring to the movie scribe's envelope-switching scam in the headline-hogging 1994 Manila Film Festival.

There were blood-chilling messages, too. Whether they're based on fact or originated in some very imaginative but idle mind, we do not know yet.

One said, "A deep source says tomorrow there'll be a fake assassination attempt to justify martial law. Maceda prepares TV announcement. Please pass so they know we know."

Another said, "Erap has ordered two planes from 250 presidential airlift wing PAF at Villamor Air Base, ready for possible flight to US—concerned PAF pilot."

"Breaking news. Confirmed military intelligence report over AM radio. Possible Luzon-wide blackout tonight due to sabotage. Please be prepared."

This one message was widely heeded: "All UP students are requested to wear black on Thursday and Friday to show that truth is dead and justice was denied. Please pass to all UP students and alumni."

This chain message was sent a countless number of times, but not because of the warning at the end: "I love Erap. I support Erap. I do not want Erap to resign. Send this message to 9 friends and in three days, you will lose 9 friends. Do not ignore this. This is true."

This one is a variation of the above: "Let us pray that our president be acquitted in the impeachment trial. Please pass this to nine of your friends and you will notice that after three days, you have no more friends."

Many people ignored the messages and erased them as soon as they received them, but more people passed on to others whatever they received. And all laughed at the funny messages, or cringed at the corny ones.

Ignored or ridiculed, the jokes and warnings all prove the power of the text message, one of the vital factors that made Edsa 2001 a success.

I was just performing my duty, says Speaker after getting booed

By Volt Contreras

HOUSE Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella dismissed as "immaterial" the loud booing he received from the Edsa throng during President Macapagal's inaugural speech on Saturday.

"I was just performing a constitutional duty," said Fuentebella, of Camarines Sur. "If I were not there (on stage) it would leave the impression that the House was not supporting the new president.

"It (the boos) was immaterial to me."

A source said President Macapagal herself phoned Fuentebella requesting him to be present at the Edsa Shrine for her midday oath-taking ceremony.

The source said Fuentebella, while waiting with some other congressmen at the Galleria Suites coffee shop in a building behind the Shrine, called up former President Estrada to inform him that he would attend Ms Macapagal's oath-taking.

"But his presence there was out of a constitutional duty to recognize President Macapagal," the source said of Fuentebella.

After the Edsa Shrine rites, Fuentebella went home to Tandang Sora, Quezon City and called for a majority party caucus at his residence.

In a news conference that followed, he vowed to cooperate with the Macapagal administration. He read a statement of support which he co-signed with Senate President Aquilino Pimentel.

"We will cooperate and continue with the legislative agenda," Fuentebella said.

Only nine session days remain before the 11th Congress adjourns on Feb. 8 and politicians go on a campaign mode for the May elections.

Fuentebella said priority would be given to the much-delayed 2001 national budget bill and the controversial power industry reform bill, which would pave the way for the privatization of the National Power Corp.

The power bill is currently on the bicameral committee level.

But some congressmen who attended the caucus believed that the House would soon be reorganized again now that political power has shifted to Lakas, the dominant party in the minority bloc.

Western Samar Rep. Antonio Nachura, one of the 11 House prosecutors in the impeachment trial, was caught on TV saying it might be possible ("*puwede pa rin*") to reinstate Las Piñas Rep. Manuel Villar, Fuentebella's predecessor and one of the acknowledged "heroes" of People Power 2001.

When told of this, Fuentebella said, "We still have the numbers. But it is still up to them (minority)."

Estrada's Lamp coalition still formed the majority bloc, counting 135 out of the House's 218 seats.

But according to Manila Rep. Sandy Ocampo, Fuentebella told the congressmen during the closed-door caucus that "his continuing as Speaker is really in their (his party mates') hands."

Deputy Speaker Gerardo Espina of Biliran said "it's very easy to call for a reorganization. All that is needed is a motion to declare all positions vacant. In our kind of politics, that is entirely possible."

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PARAÑAQUE MAYOR JOEY MARQUEZ

Taking 'Tsong' seriously

By THE STAFF

INTERVIEW

HE easily makes people laugh, on his TV sitcom "Kool Ka Lang" where the funniest parts are often his ad libs, in casual conversation and even in interviews. But Joey Marquez, 40, still needs to convince many people that he's always serious when it comes to doing his job as Parañaque mayor.

Indeed, sometimes, it is not easy to tell if he's still serious or is joking. He either wittingly or unwittingly lets slip a "wrong" word or a ludicrous phrase here and there. Is he waiting for you to laugh at his joke, or is he congratulating himself because you did not catch the error?

Still, it is apparent that Marquez, married to former movie sex siren Alma Moreno, 41, takes his public service job seriously and that he's trying hard to learn more as he goes along.

Three nights before Joseph Estrada stepped down from the presidency, Marquez, known to TV audiences as "Tsong," predicted during a chat what Erap would do: He would not resign, but would call for a snap election in which he would not be a candidate. Which is exactly what Estrada did, although he was roundly rejected.

Either Márquez has a hot line to Estrada's deepest thoughts, or he is a serious, thinking politician indeed.

You came from Tagaytay?

Yeoj, my 10-year-old son, is into karting, so I watched him there. He is competing on Feb. 3.

How was your vacation in the United States?

OK *lang*. We were there for 10 days. It was our first time to travel as a family. It was also the first time I was permitted to leave the country.

Why were you banned from leaving the country?

I was not banned. It applies to all Metro Manila mayors and provincial governors, on orders of the Office of the President.

How come Bong (Revilla Jr., a movie actor who is also governor of Cavite) and Jinggoy (Ejercito, another actor who is also San Juan mayor) are always out of the country?

Maybe they have permits. That's a privilege given to them by the boss. Actually, that's one issue that we would like to push, the travel permit for mayors. If you want to travel on non-government time, like leave on the evening of Friday and come back on Sunday, *wala ka namang kaso, dapat puwede ka*.

Can we ask personal questions?

Oo naman, huwag lang love life.

Is that your real hair?

Yeah. Actually, receding *na talaga ang* hair *ko, nandito na* (points to the top of his head).

What did you do?

I tried almost everything—Regroe for about five years, Minoxidil kay Dr. (Vinzons) Pineda, sabila and even this needle which they put on my scalp. *Tiniis ko lahat 'yon*. But it's Propasia which worked for me. It was my last resort, but it was like magic for me. It's an organic tablet that you drink every day. After a year, *ganito na ang* hair *ko*.

When it was not yet available here, it cost about $400 for 90 days. But after it was approved by the (Bureau of Food and Drugs) here, it now costs P1,900 for 28 tablets.

Who's dominant, you or Alma (or Ness, from her real name, Venessa Laxamana)?

On complicated matters and out-of-the-house decisions, *ako*. But when it comes to everything inside the house, *siya lahat 'yon*.

What do you fight about?

My being good-looking *siguro* (Smiles). When I also force her to go back to school, *nag-aaway kami*.

Did you finish college?

Yes, commerce, major in accounting at Angeles University in Pampanga. I studied in San Beda for a while, then I transferred.

You went through college on a basketball scholarship?

No. I played for Gilbey's Gin, which later became Ginebra, from 1981 to 1985. Then it was Alaska from 1986 to 1987.

At Angeles University, I used to play tennis. I was 5'10 at that time. When a basketball coach saw me, he said, "Why don't you shift to basketball?" But I didn't know how to play basketball at that time, although I knew how to jump because I was a winner in the high-jump competition.

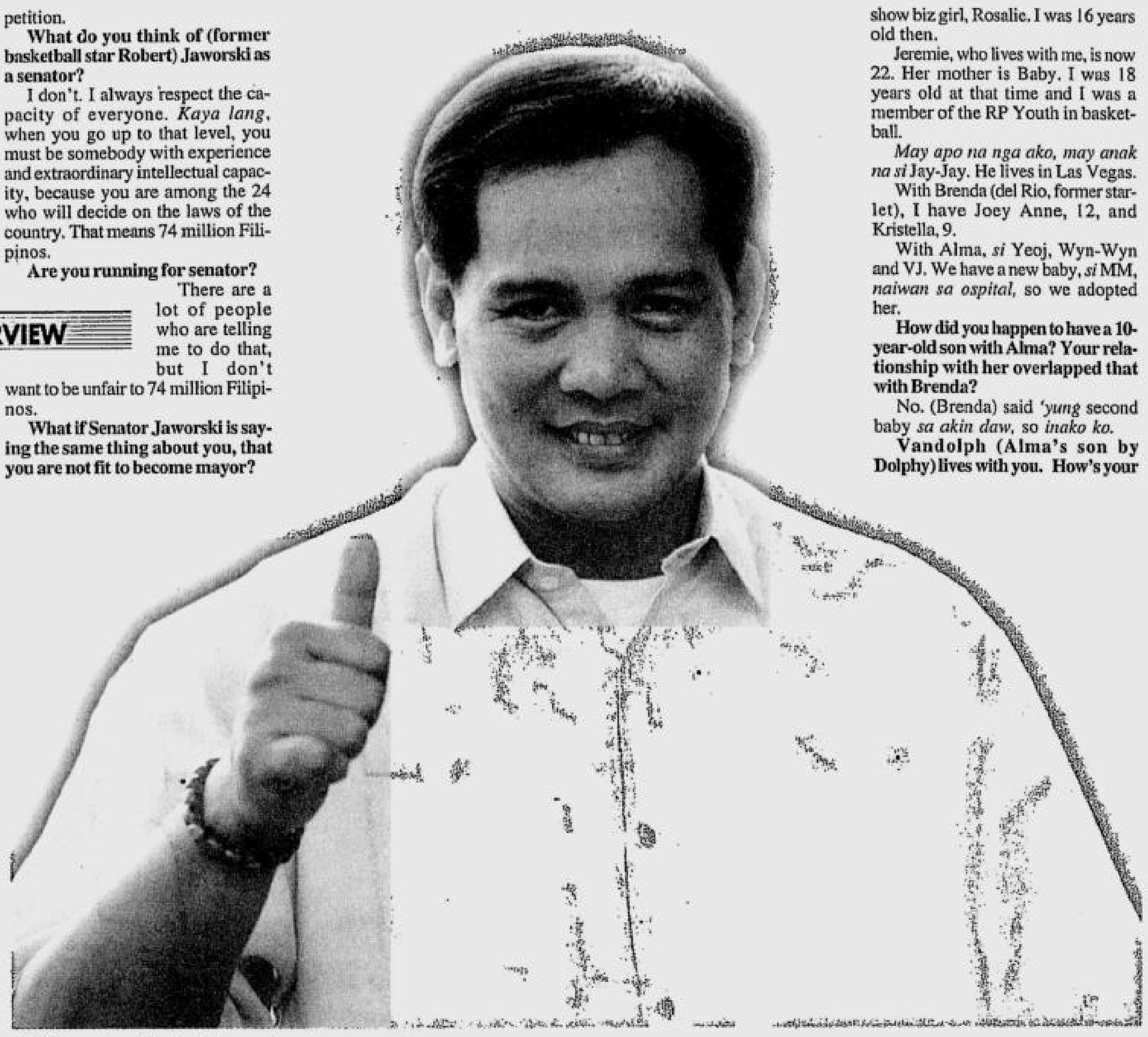
What do you think of (former basketball star Robert) Jaworski as a senator?

I don't. I always respect the capacity of everyone. *Kaya lang*, when you go up to that level, you must be somebody with experience and extraordinary intellectual capacity, because you are among the 24 who will decide on the laws of the country. That means 74 million Filipinos.

Are you running for senator?

There are a lot of people who are telling me to do that, but I don't want to be unfair to 74 million Filipinos.

What if Senator Jaworski is saying the same thing about you, that you are not fit to become mayor?



BEING underestimated is an advantage, says Marquez.

I respect that. We should respect each other's opinion. I wouldn't get offended because I know my capacity.

If you ask me about being a mayor, then we can sit down and talk about it. If you ask me about being a vice mayor, I've been there. But if you ask me about being a senator, I still have to study a lot.

You don't look that far ahead as far as your political career is concerned?

I think that's one mistake of most politicians *kaya wala siguro tayong pinupuntahan*. They consider the position a career. That's wrong. It should be a moral responsibility, it's not a permanent thing. When you say it's a career, it connotes something from which you would like to get back something, like perhaps popularity, power or wealth. It doesn't have the idealism of thinking that someday, my children will benefit from what I do today.

What do you mean, wealth? Erap is supposed to be earning only P50,000 a month, but he has billions in the bank.

It's very hard to comment on that.

Aren't you one of the five Metro Manila mayors who are anti-Erap?

I'm anti-personal interest. When you say anti-Erap, it means anti-government.

So you're for resignation?

I'm for the Filipinos.

Why do you always give safe answers?

Can I be frank? *Alam mo minsan nape*-pressure *din ako ng* opposition on where I stand. I've always been a watchdog since the beginning. I go by the saying, "I'll go where my people goes," because if I go the other way, I'd be alone.

What do Parañaque people want?

They want a peaceful solution . . . that we go back to normal.

What's going back to normal?

Lower unemployment rate, being business-friendly and environment-conscious. My main concern is to make Parañaque different from the rest, safe, with good revenues and good relationship between labor and employers. Believe it or not, we have only 2.3 percent unemployment, from 12 percent. We have a 93 percent crime solution rate.

You organized Kabatak. Is it a militia or vigilante group?

It's for public safety, a safety net for civilians.

Are you pro-gun?

I am.

So these civilians are armed?

They should have something to protect themselves with. In Parañaque, the population is around 700,000 and we only have 200 policemen. We're talking about 3,000-4,000 per policeman. That's next to impossible when you're talking about a safe environment.

But today, we have 40,000 civilians who are working hand in hand with the police and the government and they are not getting any salary.

What do they get out of it?

They protect their community and that's the reward that they get. I offer them insurance, legal assistance and hospitalization. The Philippine National Police cannot give us more personnel because they said *kulang daw ang tao at walang pera*.

I saw it in Subic where the law enforcers are the security guards. They have shotguns and police uniforms. So I thought about doing the same thing.

How rich are you? Let's put it this way. We can survive without me working for 20 years. That's setting luxury aside, but we can still eat three meals a day and I can send all my children to school

I wanted to hire security guards, but they would have lesser powers and authority and would be under our chief of police. But I was not allowed to do that. *Para daw* private army. I told them I didn't mind being perceived as having a private army, as long as my constituents, my family and other families are safe when they go out in Parañaque.

You have political advisers?

None.

No think-tank?

I'm fond of reading books, from Alvin Toffler's "Future Shock" to "Art of War," and novels like Sidney Sheldon.

You have time to read?

Do you know where my library is? It's inside my comfort room. I have about 200 books there because that's the only place I can be alone and have privacy.

What's your biggest problem in Parañaque?

Politics. Because there are people who wouldn't accept defeat. *Sabi ko nga*, politics is supposed to be only one day every three years. After that, *pare-pareho na tayo*.

I'm looking for a perfect world. I'm a dreamer. The people who invented all these things that we're enjoying now were dreamers. Some of them failed but some of them succeeded, but they were all dreamers.

But we can't just stay being dreamers. We have to be doers also. So I act on my dreams, no matter if I fail or succeed. If I fail, there's nothing wrong with that.

What do you want to do after another three years of being mayor?

I'd like to live a private life. In nine years of being mayor, I've done my part.

You will leave politics? That's unusual.

What's so unusual about that? If I don't win, I will go back to my private life.

Who will be your opponent in the coming elections?

(Former mayor Pablo) Olivares.

The "*Karatula* (Billboard) King, according to Paranaque residents?"

Actually, they now call him "*suki* (regular customer)" *dahil laban daw ng laban*.

How old is your oldest child?

Twenty-four, *si* Jay-Jay, now in the States. That was with a non-show biz girl, Rosalie. I was 16 years old then.

Jeremie, who lives with me, is now 22. Her mother is Baby. I was 18 years old at that time and I was a member of the RP Youth in basketball.

May apo na nga ako, may anak na si Jay-Jay. He lives in Las Vegas.

With Brenda (del Rio, former starlet), I have Joey Anne, 12, and Kristella, 9.

With Alma, *si* Yeoj, Wyn-Wyn and VJ. We have a new baby, *si* MM, *naiwan sa ospital*, so we adopted her.

How did you happen to have a 10-year-old son with Alma? Your relationship with her overlapped that with Brenda?

No. (Brenda) said *'yung* second baby *sa akin daw*, so *inako ko*.

Vandolph (Alma's son by Dolphy) lives with you. How's your relationship?

Good. For me, every one of them is mine. *Mabait siyang anak*. All I do is act as a second father to him.

Who sends him to school?

His dad. But he asks me for allowance. He goes to San Agustin. Sometimes I give him P200 or P100. *Mayaman pa yata sa akin, 'yon* because he saves a lot. He doesn't spend his money. *Minsan, pati pang*-date *niya, humihingi siya sa akin*. I give him P500. *Kasi noon, pang*-date *ko*, P100 *lang*.

He bought his car with his own money, from his show biz earnings.

I'm a disciplinarian. I'd like my kids to enjoy life in a very ordinary kind of way. *Kasi 'pag naging* lavish *sila* and they grow older, *at hindi na nila kaya, kawawa naman sila*.

What about Alma?

She tends to spoil the kids.

How big is your house?

It's a seven-bedroom house. It used to be a three-bedroom house. It has been my house since I was a bachelor. But when it was being rebuilt, we moved out and rented a house in Alabang for eight months. *Pinalakihan namin* because the family was also getting bigger.

How rich are you?

Let's put it this way. We can survive without me working for 20 years. That's setting luxury aside, but we can still eat three meals a day and I can send all my children to school.

How is the relationship between you and your dad (veteran movie director Artemio Marquez)?

Our culture tells us to respect our parents. But people don't really know what happened. I grew up with my mom, who was both mother and father to me. When my dad was with Tower Productions and it was earning millions, I was working as a janitor in Clark (in Angeles City).

Do you resent him for that?

No, I even thank him for that. Maybe if I didn't experience that, *hindi ako magiging* politician. Actually, during that time, I was even denying he was my father because everybody knew him and look at me, mopping floors.

How do you feel about your father now?

He's still my dad. If he needs help, I help him. If he needs money, I give him. But if he needs love, *mahirap yata 'yon*. He's come to me a lot of times for help and I always give him.

How many children are you? The legitimate ones?

Five, I'm the youngest *at ako na lang ang natitirang* Filipino. Bess, the eldest, is in San Francisco; Damba; Babes, also in the States; Via is in Australia; then *ako*.

But I'm close to my other half-brothers and sisters, like Melanie. Actually, *may pumupunta sa akin kapatid ko daw*, asking for help, okay *lang*.

When did he first acknowledge you as his son?

When I was already into basketball. I was already 21 years old.

You don't really wear a watch?

I don't wear jewelry. This is the only thing I wear, a scapular of Our Lady of Perpetual Help with a crystal, which an old lady gave me seven years ago and she told me not to remove it, for protection.

Has it brought you luck?

So far, *mas maraming* good things *ang nangyari sa akin* more than bad ones.

What about your Buddha beads?

Kay Ness. We wear identical beads.

How come you don't wear a wedding ring?

It's not what we wear but what we feel.

The first time you ran for public office, you won because you were a movie star.

When I ran for vice mayor, it was because of (a Lakas party official) who convinced me *dahil nakita niya madaldal daw ako*. I was making people laugh. *May* potential *daw ako*. He was then one of the big shots of the administration. So he lined me up in the Lakas party. Actually, I was more afraid of winning then than losing, because I didn't know what to do.

So when I won, I realized it was a responsibility, so I took a six-month course in parliamentary procedures at the Development Academy of the Philippines and I was given personal lectures and books.

Why did you win the second time?

Siguro partly *pa rin dahil artista ako at dahil nag*-perform *ako* (on my first term). After that, *nanalo pa uli ako*, probably because of my achievements.

Why do you think you will win again this time?

Maybe what I've done was not out of personal interest but rather for what I'd like Parañaque to be in the future.

How long have you lived in Parañaque?

19 years.

What do you plan to do about the traffic in Baclaran?

Siguro let the traffic be given to the local jurisdiction. *Kasi wala sa amin, nasa* national government. Like the police should be given to the local government.

***'Di ba dapat gano'n talaga*, the police should be under the mayor?**

In Japan, the police are under the local government so that even after office hours, there are still cops around. What happens here, we have policemen who live in Malabon, and who after eight hours *uuwi na*. So *walang malasakit*.

Secondly, they tell us *hindi nila kami mabigyan dahil daw walang pondo. Kami*, we can pay our own policemen but they still don't want to give the police to us. *Hindi daw kaya ng ibang bayan, pero bakit pati kami?* We just want to protect our community.

So I'd like to make it clear that the police and the traffic, *hindi sa akin*. I know there are drivers, motorists and commuters there who blame me. *Kahit 'yung bagyo nga ako din daw ang may kasalanan*. They forget that a mayor is just like a manager who is part of a corporation.

Pero kung ang bubong nila nasira, wala silang pang-enroll, *ako ang sinisisi ng tao dahil ako ang tatay*. That's what I want to change in the minds of the people. We have to educate the people on what is the mayor's function.

Ang trabaho namin, hindi para mag-trapik sa kalye. May gumagawa niyan. Hindi sa amin 'yan.

People say Ness wants to enter politics but you won't let her?

One Marquez in politics is enough. *Ayoko ng* dynasty. I married my wife to take care of me and my children.

That's a very old outlook.

I don't think so. *Tapos na ko sa* gigolo days *ko*. I did the worst during my younger days and I don't want to do the same now. Clean fun *na lang ako ngayon*.

What's clean fun for you now?

Having an intellectual conversation with a girl who can stimulate your mind.

Can you not have that with your

TAKING/A29

Taking 'Tsong' seriously

(From page A28)

wife?

Of course I can. Do you think you will grow when you can't talk with your wife?

No more one-night stands for you now?

Wala.

Are you faithful?

What is faithful? Be more specific. *Kasi* when you go by the Bible, *mag-isip ka lang ng masama, hindi ka na* faithful.

Are you faithful to your wife?

I can always tell you I am a perfect father to my children, but a faithful husband to my wife? I don't know.

Is Ness the jealous type?

Dati. Now *hindi na.*

In your movies, your leading women catch you with other women. Does that happen in real life?

Mahirap mahuli ang hindi gumagawa. I will be a hypocrite if I say *hindi ako nagpapantasya o may 'dumi ng isip.* We all have our sexual fantasies. But doing it is another story. Thinking about it and dreaming it is OK.

Why did the rumor spread that you got (actress) Sharmaine Arnaiz pregnant?

Sana nga. When I was asked about that, I said it would be ungentlemanly of me to deny it or confirm it. It was more of a compliment to me. I'm old, I'm married. I'm not good-looking. I have sex appeal, maybe, and here's this beautiful woman whom I got pregnant. The problem is, there is no truth to that. *Sabi ko nga,* don't ask me, ask the lady.

How did Ness take that?

Smiling. *May nagkakagusto pa sa asawa niya.* That's show biz. *Makita lang kayo na nag-uusap,* people will try to make an issue out of it.

Don't you think Parañaque voters might lose their respect for you because they see you on TV every week doing silly things on a sitcom?

They should lose respect for me if they learn *na nagnanakaw ako.* On TV, I make them laugh. In real life, as a mayor, I make them happy.

Have you been involved in a graft issue?

Maraming nag-file, *walang nag*-prosper.

How do you react to comments that you're dumb?

OK lang sa akin 'yon. That is one thing *na ikinapanalo ko nung araw.* They didn't expect anything from me. I remember once when I was invited to a Rotary Club meet for the first time. *Tinatagalog nila akong lahat. 'Yung salita nila, parang* Grade 1. They were all very polite. *Na*-typecast *nila ako* from what they saw of me on TV. They didn't know that I was a college graduate.

But when I started speaking in straight English *na dire-derecho, lahat sila nakatunganga sa akin.*

That is more of an advantage for me, to be underestimated.

Do you still get that reaction?

Not anymore.

Do you think you provide the basic services to your constituents?

I provided water...

Shelter?

May budget-constraints *kami* when it comes to that.

Even low-cost housing?

There's no longer low-cost *ngayon.*

It's not so much about the quantity, but the quality.

What do you think is your biggest strength?

My being simple. I'm also versatile.

In acting?

No, in real life.

What's your biggest fear?

'Yung may mamatay sa pamilya ko.

As a politician?

Wala.

Have you ever received death threats?

Oo naman, but I always take it as a joke. Let's put it this way. I am not worried about what will happen to me in my political life. If I don't win again, I will go back to my private life and attend to my children.

Kaya lang, hindi ko pa natapos 'yung dapat kong tapusin.

Will you aspire for a higher public office?

When you run and people want you run the community, then go for it. If you don't run and people still want you to serve them, you will be appointed.

That's why I'm saying I'll go where my people go. But for me to dream about a position, *masama 'yon,* I'd only be working for my personal interest. You talk about the future but you don't realize that the future is today and not tomorrow. What you do today is your future. And if you don't do anything today, there is no future.

Ness shops for your clothes?

Yes.

You're not brand-conscious?

Si Ness *ang mas mahilig sa damit.*

I'm more comfortable in shorts and T-shirt, *pero hindi naman pwede 'yon* when I go to work.

Where do you earn more, in TV or government?

TV. GMA 7 pays me good money for the sitcom. I earn more in a month than the three company presidents combined. As a mayor, I get only P27,000 a month. *Alam mo,* I hope one day, *ang* salary *ng* local government *maging* P1 million a month, *para 'di na magnakaw.* If he does, firing squad *agad.*

How much of that legitimate income goes to your public service?

Ten percent. I have 100 scholars.

Do you dole out money?

Yes, *may balik 'yon.* That's also biblical. What you give today will be returned to you double or triple.

May dalawang parte lang sa buhay, may taga-bigay, may taga-tanggap. I'm very lucky because *nalagay ako doon sa taga-bigay.*

Do you invest?

I buy and sell used cars. I just sold a Durango.

How many cars do you own?

I use a Mazda 626 '96 model.

Do you have bodyguards?

I move around with my secretary and my brother, Damba.

Are you in the city hall every day?

Yes, especially in the morning.

Are you religious?

I don't go to Mass every Sunday. *Sabi nila,* you can talk to Him anywhere. You know, when I was in Baguio once, I went to a bookstore and bought this mechanic's book on engines. I really remember that was the book I got, but when I was about to pay for it, I saw I was holding a Bible, so *inuwi ko na.*

I tried reading it because I couldn't understand *'yung mga* "Thou shall..." So I asked my friend to simplify it. After that, I've read the Bible three times from cover to cover and every time, *iba ang dating sa 'kin,* depende sa emotions *ko. Kaya lahat ng* decisions *ko, palaging may b*iblical guidance.

Who's your role model?

If only I could be given a chance to do time travel and go back, I want to talk to Jose Rizal. I will ask him why he became a hero.

What else do you do?

Basketball, golf. Now, I'm switching to karting because of my son.

What's your favorite movie that you acted in?

"Isang Araw, Walang Diyos," by Peque Gallaga.

But that was a flop?

(Smiles).

Not "Tagos ng Dugo"?

The producer was my sister (Via Hoffman). I was asking her for allowance because I was leaving for the States. *May hindi dumating na artista,* so *ako 'yung kinuha nila.* I asked, how much? She said, $1,000. So *nag*-shoot *ako.*

What else do you want to do?

I'd like to be a dramatic actor, like Tom Hanks. He was so good in "Saving Private Ryan." It was a beautiful movie.

MARQUEZ and Alma Moreno with their children (from left) Yeoj, Wyn-Wyn and VJ.

PLDT FONKARD PLUS

PLDT TOUCH CARD

SCRATCH to Riches

CALLS AND CASH IN A FLASH!

GET A CHANCE TO WIN MILLIONS AND MILLIONS IN CASH!

TWO WAYS TO WIN:

1 INSTANT CASH
Buy a 200, 300 or 500 peso Fonkard or Touch Card bundled with a scratch card. Scratch for a chance to win instant cash prizes.

2 RAFFLE DRAW
Send your used Fonkard or Touch Card as a raffle entry for a chance to win in the preliminary and grand draws.

INSTANT CASH:

1. A PLDT-branded "Scratch to Riches" scratch card together with any P200, P300 or P500 denominations of PLDT Fonkard Plus and Touch Card in a plastic package at the time of sale, shall be eligible for the Instant Cash promo.
2. Customers simply have to scratch the film on the card to reveal if they have won a cash prize or not. Cash prizes range from P100, P1,000, P10,000, P100,000 and P1,000,000.
3. The promo period shall commence on November 27, 2000 and shall end on January 31, 2001. This promo period shall be announced and published by PLDT.

Claiming of Prizes

1. All cash prizes can be redeemed from any PLDT Business Office and Provincial Exchange, nationwide.
2. Only the winning scratch cards with PLDT-authenticated security codes will be honored. PLDT will verify the authenticity of the winning scratch cards pursuant to its list of security codes. This list is also issued to and deposited with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The DTI representative shall be called to attest the authenticity of the winning scratch card, if necessary. Winners will have to present the winning "Scratch to Riches" scratch card, a valid picture ID (e.g. employee ID, passport or driver's license) to the PLDT Business Office or Provincial Exchange manager. Winners will be given a waiver form which they should accomplish and sign, waiving any further claim they may have from PLDT. The accomplished waiver form should be presented to PLDT upon claiming of the check representing the cash prize. The check can be claimed after five (5) working days upon presentation of the winning scratch card and other requirements to the same Business Office or Provincial Exchange.
3. Customers should present their winning scratch cards on or before April 1, 2001. Claims made after this date shall not be honored."
4. Employees of PLDT, its advertising and promo agencies, its suppliers for this particular promotion and participating dealer outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining this promotion and claiming the prizes therefore.
5. PLDT shall shoulder the 20% tax for the winners who have won prizes exceeding P10,000.

RAFFLE DRAW:

1. Consumers will get a chance to win the following:

Preliminary Draw

No. of Winners	Cash Prize	No. of winners per area
4	P 500,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
20	P 10,000	5 in GMA, 5 in Luzon, 5 in Visayas, 5 in Mindanao

Grand Draw

No. of Winners	Cash Prize	No. of winners per area
4	P 1,000,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
4	P 500,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
10	P 100,000	4 in GMA, 2 in Luzon, 2 in Visayas, 2 in Mindanao
80	P 10,000	20 in GMA, 20 in Luzon, 20 in Visayas, 20 in Mindanao

2. Enclose a used P200, P300, or P500 denomination, or a combination of two (2) P100 PLDT Fonkard Plus or Touch Card with an expiry date from September 2000 onwards in a white envelope with the customer's name, address, phone no. and signature on it. Drop it in drop boxes placed in PLDT Business Offices, Provincial Exchanges and authorized dealers.
3. There will be two raffle draws: the preliminary draw will be on Jan. 6, 2001, and the grand draw will be on Feb. 10, 2001. Venue and the time of the draws will be submitted to DTI, announced and published in major dailies at a later date. Entries submitted from Nov. 27, 2000 to Dec. 31, 2000 shall qualify for the preliminary draw. Non-winning entries from the preliminary draw automatically qualify for the grand raffle draw, plus all incoming entries till Jan 31, 2001. They will be segregated according to the following locations: Greater Manila Area, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.
4. Winners in the preliminary draw shall automatically be disqualified in the final draw.
5. In cases where the winner's name is drawn more than once within the same raffle date, he will get the prize of higher value. The winner however, shall not be allowed to get both prizes.

Claiming of Prizes:

1. Winners shall be notified via registered mail. All prizes of the winners of the grand raffle draw can be claimed at the PLDT Main Office, 3/F Ramon Cojuangco Bldg. Makati Ave., cor. De La Rosa St., Makati City. In claiming their prizes, winners should present a valid picture ID (e.g. employee ID, passport or driver's license) to the PLDT Marketing Services Department. PLDT shall give them a waiver form that they have to fill up and sign. The accomplished waiver form should be presented to PLDT upon claiming of the check representing the prize. The check can be claimed after five (5) working days upon submission of the requirements to the Marketing Services Department.
2. Winners in the instant cash portion of the promo are still qualified for the raffle draw. Prizes for the raffle draw have to be redeemed within 60 days from the winner's receipt of notification through registered mail. Unclaimed prizes after the said date shall be forfeited with prior approval of DTI.
3. Employees of PLDT, its advertising and promo agencies, its suppliers for this particular promotion and participating dealer outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining this promotion and claiming the prizes therefore.
4. PLDT shall shoulder the 20% tax for the winners who have won prizes exceeding P10,000.

Hurry! Tumawag na nang tumawag for more chances of winning millions!

For more information, call 171, 1-800-888-9090 or visit the PLDT Business Office or Provincial Exchange nearest you. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1227, Series of 2000.

PLDT
convergence@home

www.pldt.com.ph

SM CINEMA GUIDE

SM Dial-A-Movie • Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR 4173868

1	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
2	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	RED PLANET
4	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	HIGHLANDER
6	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
7	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
8	DOLBY SURROUND	SUPER IDOL

SM CENTERPOINT 7149522 • 7161416

1	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
3	DTS	RED PLANET
4	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	HIGHLANDER
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SUPER IDOL

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
3	DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	RED PLANET
5	DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	LITTLE NICKY
8	DOLBY SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
9	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
10	DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
11	DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
12	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	RED PLANET
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	HIGHLANDER
3	DOLBY SURROUND	MIRACLE FIGHTER
4	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	MEET THE PARENTS
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE 6TH DAY
7	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
9	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
10	DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
12	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SUPER IDOL

SM MEGAMALL 6331601 • 6329401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
2	DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	LITTLE NICKY
4	DTS	HIGHLANDER
5	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
9	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
10	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	SUPER IDOL
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KANGKONG
4	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	DOLBY SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
7	DTS	THE RED PLANET
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	HIGHLANDER
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
12	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY

SM SOUTHMALL 8068888 • 8066782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	REMEMBER THE TITANS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE RED PLANET
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	HIGHLANDER
9	ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
10	ULTRA SURROUND	SUPER IDOL

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE RED PLANET
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	MARKOVA
2	ULTRA SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
3	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	CROCODILE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
7	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN

SM ILOILO 3203422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
3	ULTRA SURROUND	DEATH ROW
4	ULTRA SURROUND	CRACKER JACK
5	ULTRA SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
6	ULTRA SURROUND	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	HIGHLANDER
8	ULTRA SURROUND	LOST SOULS

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE RED PLANET
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	HIGHLANDER
3	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
6	DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

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GLORIETTA 1
formerly QUAD

1 RED PLANET
2 TANGING YAMAN
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 THE 6TH DAY

GLORIETTA 4
All Digital Sound

1 HIGHLANDER in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2 REMEMBER THE TITANS in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 THE RED PLANET THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (Phil. Premiere) Art Film in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 EMPERORS NEW GROOVE in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 LITTLE NICKY in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 MEET THE PARENTS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1 LITTLE NICKY in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 THE RED PLANET in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 MEET THE PARENTS in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1 THE RED PLANET THX in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 LITTLE NICKY in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 REMEMBER THE TITANS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 HIGHLANDER in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 BALAHIBONG PUSA in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DSD) RED PLANET
2 (SDDS) LITTLE NICKY
3 (DTS) MEET THE PARENTS
4 GOLD (DTS) RED PLANET
5 GOLD (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
6 GOLD (SDDS) TANGING YAMAN
7 GOLD (DOLBY) REMEMBER THE TITANS
8 [illegible] THE 6TH DAY
9 [illegible] LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
10 [illegible] BALAHIBONG PUSA

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 SUPER IDOL
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 (DTS) KANGKONG
4 RESERVE
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) RED PLANET
2 (DTS) SUPER IDOL
3 LITTLE NICKY

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 SUPER IDOL
3 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 KANGKONG
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) RED PLANET
5 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 SUPER IDOL
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 HIGHLANDER
5 LITTLE NICKY
6 RED PLANET
7 KANGKONG
8 THE 6TH DAY

Uniwide Metromall
(Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074
1 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY ₱30.00
2 WHO AM I
3 FIRST STRIKE
4 ARMOUR OF GOD
5 JACKY CHAN FESTIVAL
6

Uniwide Coastal Mall
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
1 WATCH 3 MOVIES FOR ONLY ₱30.00
2 HOT SPOT
3 LABAN KUNG LABAN
4 CRIME STOPPER

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 THE 6TH DAY
2 DEATH ROW

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515
1 KANGKONG
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 SUPER IDOL

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
A SUPER IDOL

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 SUPER IDOL

GOTESCO CINEMAS

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (DOLBY) BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 KANGKONG
3 TANGING YAMAN
4 HIGHLANDER
5 MEET THE PARENTS
6 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
7 (DTS) RED PLANET
8 (SDDS) REMEMBER THE TITANS
9 (DOLBY) LITTLE NICKY

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 KANGKONG
4 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
5
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 SUPER IDOL
4 (SDDS) DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
5 LITTLE NICKY
6 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
7 (DTS) RED PLANET
8 KANGKONG
9 REMEMBER THE TITANS

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) RED PLANET
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 TANGING YAMAN
4 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
5 (SDDS) REMEMBER THE TITANS
6 SUPERIDOL
7 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER
8 KANGKONG

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 KANGKONG
2 THE 6TH DAY
3 (DTS) RED PLANET
4 BALAHIBONG PUSA
5 (SDDS) REMEMBER THE TITANS
6 (DOLBY) DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
7 (DOLBY) HIGHLANDER

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson
Lords SUPER IDOL
Jennet NAKED INSTINCT

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 RED PLANET
2 SUPER IDOL
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 LITTLE NICKY

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 SUPER IDOL

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 RED PLANET
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 LITTLE NICKY
4 HIGHLANDER
5 KANGKONG

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 KANGKONG
3 SUPER IDOL
4 RED PLANET
5 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
6 HIGHLANDER

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 SUPER IDOL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 KANGKONG
3 (DTS) RED PLANET

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 (DTS) THE 6TH DAY
3 (DOLBY) RED PLANET
4 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) RED PLANET
2 SUPER IDOL
3 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
4 (DTS) BALAHIBONG PUSA

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 (DTS) RED PLANET
4 LOST SOULS
5 KANGKONG

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 RED PLANET
3 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 RED PLANET
3 ROAD TRIP

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311
1 SUGANG TONDO
2 THE 6TH DAY
3 KANGKONG

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
2 RED PLANET
3 SUPER IDOL

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 RED PLANET
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 SUPER IDOL
4 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783
1 (DTS) BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 (DTS) SUPER IDOL

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 BALAHIBONG PUSA

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 SUPER IDOL
2 BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 KANGKONG

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 RED PLANET
2 SUGATANG PUSO
3 UNBREAKABLE
4 THE 6TH DAY

Berma
tel 879.2168
1 CLOSED
2 CLOSED

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 SUPER IDOL
2 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 RED PLANET

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) MEET THE PARENTS
2 TANGING YAMAN
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 (DTS ES) PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

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1. THE RED PLANET
2. THE 6TH DAY
3. BALAHIBONG PUSA
4. REMEMBER THE TITANS
5. HIGHLANDER
6. LITTLE NICKY
7. MEET THE PARENTS

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1. THE RED PLANET
2. REMEMBER THE TITANS
3. SUPER IDOL
4. LITTLE NICKY
5. HIGHLANDER
6. BALAHIBONG PUSA

BACOLOD
(034)441-0453

1. MEET THE PARENTS
2. TANGING YAMAN
3. EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
4. CROCODILES
5. GATAS
6. EX-CON

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	TANGING YAMAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	HIGHLANDER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	RED PLANET
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	LITTLE NICKY
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	RED PLANET
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	KANGKONG
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	BALAHIBONG PUSA
MIRAMAR	KATAYAN / BODY TO BODY
ODEON	BALAHIBONG PUSA
ODEON-2	RED PLANET
ROBEN	KANGKONG
TANDEM-1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
TANDEM-2	NAGHUHUMIYAW
TIMES	WHAT LIES BENEATH / ANACONDA 2000
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SA IYO ANG SARAP SA IYO ANG LIGAYA
ACT-2	ARAYY
ACT-3	HIRAM NA KATAWAN
ACT-4	BIRADOR
CORONET-2	DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
QUEZON-1	KANGKONG
REMAR	BALAHIBONG PUSA
REMAR-2	KANGKONG
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
OCEAN CINEMA-A	LARO SA BAGA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	GUEVARRA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-2	THE 6TH DAY
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KANGKONG
CINEMA-2	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-3	DEATH ROW
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-6	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-7	SPIRIT WARRIORS
CINEMA-8	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MEET THE PARENTS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
CINEMA-12	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-14	GATAS
CINEMA-15	TANGING YAMAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-3	THE 6TH DAY
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-2	RED PLANET
CINEMA-3	HIGHLANDER
CINEMA-4	LITTLE NICKY
CINEMA-5	MEET THE PARENTS
CINEMA-6	REMEMBER THE TITANS

The icing, not the cake

(From page A31)

Describe it! Guest: You get goose-bumps—it's like your skin is standing on end! (Hey, that's quite a trick!)

* * *

Host: How many times have you fallen in love? Guest: Oh, before, so many times! Host: How many times—can you remember? Guest: Oh, *madalas din ako noon minsan*! (*Madalas*? *Minsan*? Make up your mind!)

* * *

Host: So, what happened to your investigation? Guest: Well, I met with the commission en banc. Host: Is that so? And what did the bank say?(Wheee!)

Quote, unquote

JOHN Ruskin: The entire object of true education is to make people not merely do the right thing, but to enjoy it; not merely industrious, but to love industry; not merely learned, but to love knowledge.

Logan Smith: There are two things to aim at in life: first, to get what you want, and then to enjoy it. Only the wisest people achieve the second.

Samuel Butler: All of the animals except man know that the principal business of life is to enjoy it.

Oliver Herford: There is no time like the pleasant!

Feedback

FROM **Lenaganus** in the United States: "I really find your boob-tube booboos funny, and the people who utter them, so clueless. **Nag-iisip ba sila bago nila sabihin ang mga iyon?**

Bakit kasi tayong mga Pinoy, mahilig magsalita ng Ingles Kahit ang kausap ay kapwa Pilipino at nagsasalita ng Tagalog? Tagalugin na lang kasi! Paki-advise nga ang mga iyan—*lalo na ang mga* artist . . .

"*Ang lakas pa rin ng* colonial mentality natin. If only they knew that people here in the states who speak a language other than English prefer to use their native tongue. *Sila naman na ang audience ay Tagalog, pilit na nag-i-*English! Please tell them to stop.

"They should always be proud to speak the Filipino language. Kindly tell them too that they won't look intellectual just by speaking English. It is the core and substance of what they say that will show what is between their ears. And they can present their ideas better when they use Tagalog.

"I always enjoy reading your column. That's what I call intellectual views, writing and English use."

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Pelikula is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation, published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication.

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

EDSA 2001

The biggest box-office hit since '86

By Emmie G. Velarde

CERTAIN ancient and venerable faith traditions preach about an Eternal Drama that repeats in exactly the same way every few thousand years.

On this is based such corollary theories as karma philosophy, and experiential enigmas as déjà vu, reincarnation, precognition and parallel realities. It is also the basis of numerous research into the human mind as the last frontier, and of such heightened-awareness movies as Jeannot Szwarc's "Somewhere in Time," "Chances Are," Coppola's "Peggy Sue Got Married" and, all right, Robert Zemeckis' "Back to the Future."

"Edsa 2001," the Philippines' biggest box-office hit this week—in fact the biggest since 1986—might have reminded some moviephiles of the early 1990s Bill Murray starrer, "Groundhog Day."

"Groundhog" was far from a blockbuster and probably had an impact only on those it was destined to touch, and touch profoundly. In which case, the collective memory may have to be refreshed:

A man wakes up to a strangely familiar morning, starts to act in strangely familiar circumstances, and proceeds to interact with strangely familiar people. He makes one huge and terrible blunder at some point, for which he sulks all the way till bedtime, all through his last waking hours . . . until the next morning, when he wakes up to the same strangely familiar morning, starts to act in the same strangely familiar circumstances, interacts with the same strangely familiar people . . . et cetera.

This happens several times over. In the course of every "new" day the man recognizes moments that need some adjustment, fine-tuning, alteration, or outright rectification. He complies with one demand at a time, slowly and cautiously ironing out kinks.

Not everything requires an overhaul, it turns out. Sometimes all that's called for is uttering a less cruel word, casting a gentler glance, or aborting an impulsive reaction.

The required revisions become more complicated as he gets to the root of the huge and terrible blunder which, in the first place, sent him to the Sandman wishing he had done this thing or that differently. Meanwhile, the other people in every scene carry on as though they haven't the same memory of the previous day as he does, so that it sometimes feels like being in the same situation with another set of characters.

One day, suddenly, he gets every little thing right.

Simply put, "Groundhog Day" tells a story of how practice makes perfect, and of how few and fortunate are those presented with the chance to do the same things better!

"Edsa 2001" is a refinement of its precursor, "Edsa 1986," all the way. Each boasts a full gallery of main protagonists and a cast of millions. Basic storylines are identical: Citizenry, playing the dual role of Hopeful (at first) and Fed-Up (at last), ousts Unpopular Leader via a lot of pressure, and a lot more frolic.

Screened one after the other, "1986" and "2001" will make a veritable "Groundhog Week." Sequence of events will start with national elections and great beginnings, then move on to rosy times that will soon give way to high drama, intrigue, crime, treachery, sabotage, discovery, confrontation, resistance, more drama, more intrigue, and so on.

I forgot to say it will be an epic, which is why it will be a blockbuster while "Groundhog Day" was not.

Finally it will build up to the grand finale. Citizenry will see the light, but will first set out to polish key scenes in the 1986 chapter. There will be more introspection, more reason, more vigilance. Room will be found for a historic court battle, allowing for several more heroes and heroines of the finest mold, the better to tell a much clearer story. Probability of bloodshed will be minimized without prejudice to high emotion.

Finally, Citizenry—better informed, more fully in charged, more vigorous and wearing a younger face—flexes over two million sets of body parts to overcome Leader.

Direction in "2001" is alternately manifest and incognito, a masterful, delightful mix, close to Divine. Crowd scenes are spontaneous and natural, wondrously moving.

To illustrate: With tasteful reticence, Nikki Coseteng more than sufficiently makes up for her stint in "Sa Kuko ng Agila." Loren Legarda-Leviste rates a grand slam (apart from fully deserving the standing ovation she now gets everywhere) were she up against only her cameo appearance in "Markova: Comfort Gay." Coney Reyes delivers her most impassioned lines ever on a separate stage, as spokesperson for Jesus, no less.

And Tessie Aquino-Oreta—what can anyone say that hasn't been text-ed to death?

The closing scenes of 1986 may be more fiery and bracing like a Coppola, but 2001's has a more mature, softer, more dignified texture, like a Merchant-Ivory. Vanquished, Leader is allowed a graceful exit, his lady smiling (radiantly!) beside him, and faithful friends saying goodbye, unhurriedly.

With undisguised pride, a television commentator said "Edsa 2001" was another "shining example" the Filipinos were setting for the whole world. It can also be interpreted, worldwide, as a demonstration of how to not learn major lessons, and then have to mount a costly, almost crippling, tableau to correct an equally costly, almost crippling, mistake.

Bill Murray had the luxury of having someone declare, "Cut! It's a wrap!" from behind the cameras. "Edsa 2001" is still baking in an afterglow as we write.

All right, practice makes perfect. And then what?

We say perfect endings, in the movies as in real life, should preclude sequels.

WATCHING the drama unfold on television in Cagayan de Oro. Will there be a sequel?

FROILAN GALLARDO

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

Kris has been busy at Edsa. Her column will come out on Wednesday instead. -Ed

The icing, not the cake

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"'BALAHIBONG Pusa' is a good big-screen debut for **Yam Laranas**, whose visual gift makes the sexy movie a special treat. But the film's plotting leaves much to be desired.

For his next project, Laranas must make sure that his script is as eventful as his images—otherwise, he'll end up like other visuals-oriented filmmakers who eventually lose their hold on their audience.

Viewers love striking visualizations, but they're really just the icing on the cake. The truly important thing is to tell a good, eventful story.

That's what's lacking in "Balahibong Pusa." The movie is about a young woman (**Joyce Jimenez**) who discovers that her mother (**Elizabeth Oropesa**) is having an affair with a mature man (**Julio Diaz**). Julio's daughter (**Rica Peralejo**) has a lover (**Jay Manalo**) who eventually gets involved with Joyce as well.

On top of that, Julio also gets the hots for Joyce and, unable to handle his frustration, he flips. To top it all, it's eventually revealed that Julio has a sleazy thing going with his own daughter.

That sounds "eventful" enough, but as the film actually progresses, it becomes apparent that the plot and character development remains mostly at the sensual level, and genuine psychological and emotional insight is blunted.

That's partly due to the movie's primary interest in camerawork and editing, which are allowed to deflect viewers' attention from more important considerations. Scenes are slowed down so that the camera can savor, caress and linger over moments that really don't deserve such inordinately detailed treatment.

A rethinking of priorities is definitely in order.

Exclusive deal

HBO Asia has signed an exclusive movie deal with Lakeshore International, an independent production company. The three movies in the deal:

"The Gift," a thriller about a psychic (**Cate Blanchett**) who helps investigators locate a missing woman. **Keanu Reeves** plays a vicious wife-beater, and **Hilary Swank** is his wife.

"Delivering Milo," about an angel who tries to convince a baby to agree to be born to his earthly parents. The film stars Bridget Fonda, Campbell Scott and Albert Finney.

And "Steal This Movie," a film about Abbie Hoffman, the flamboyant leader of anti-war protests in the '60s. With Vincent D'Onofrio, Janeane Garofalo and Jeanne Tripplehorn.

Boob-tube booboos

HOST: What is your definition of happiness?

Guest: Happiness?

Host: Let me put it another way: what is your advice to the viewers out there, for them to be happy?

Guest: Well, one thing I can advise them: you should be contentive with what you have.

(Contentive?—Ah, *kuntento*!)

* * *

Host: Is it ok in your school if a student appears in the movies, TV, or commercials? Student: *Okay lang*—as long as it is in decent. (Huh?!)

* * *

Host: How do you feel when you're in love? Guest: You feel—you feel—Host: Yes, what happens when you fall in love?

THE ICING/p.A30)

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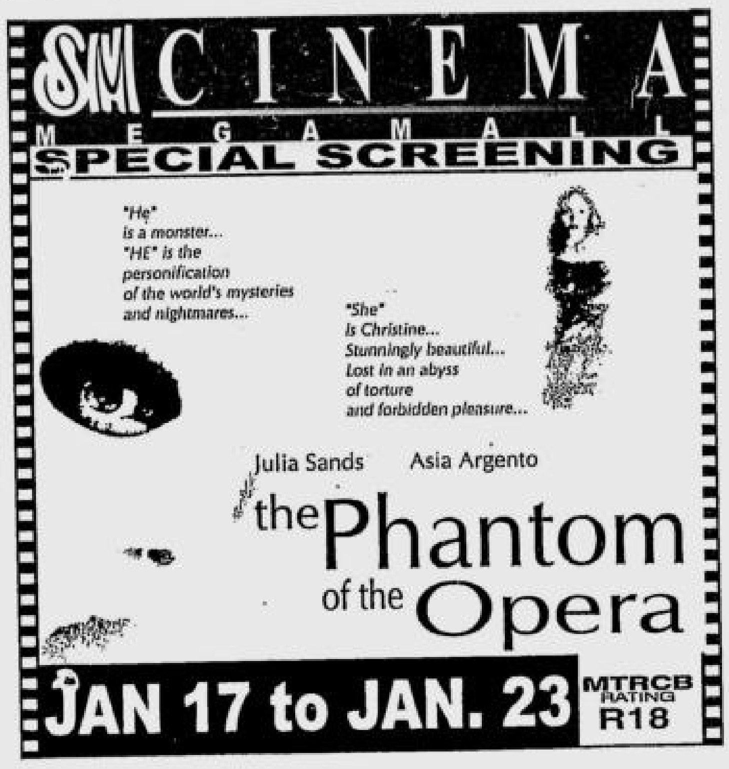

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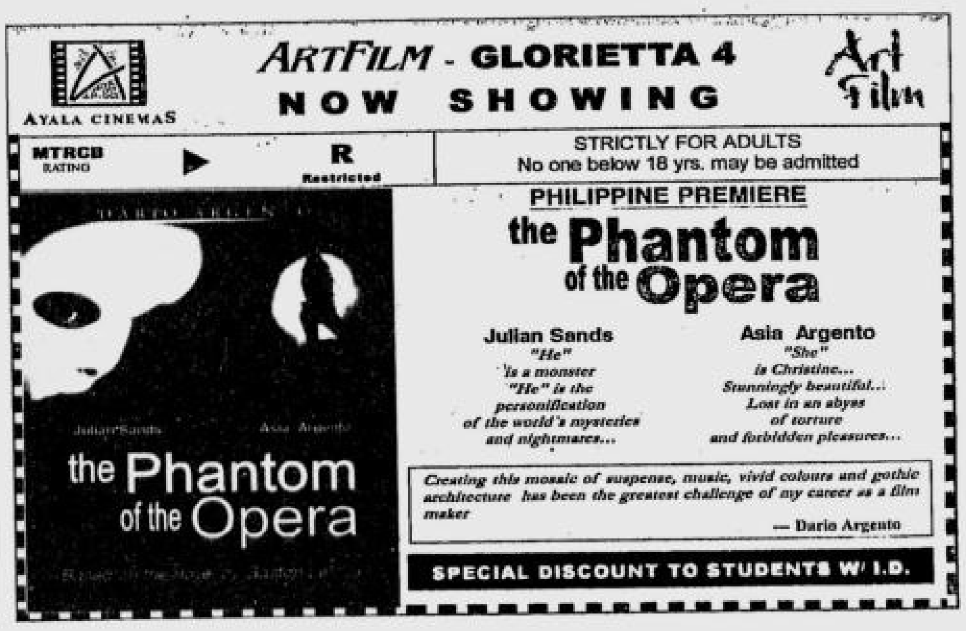

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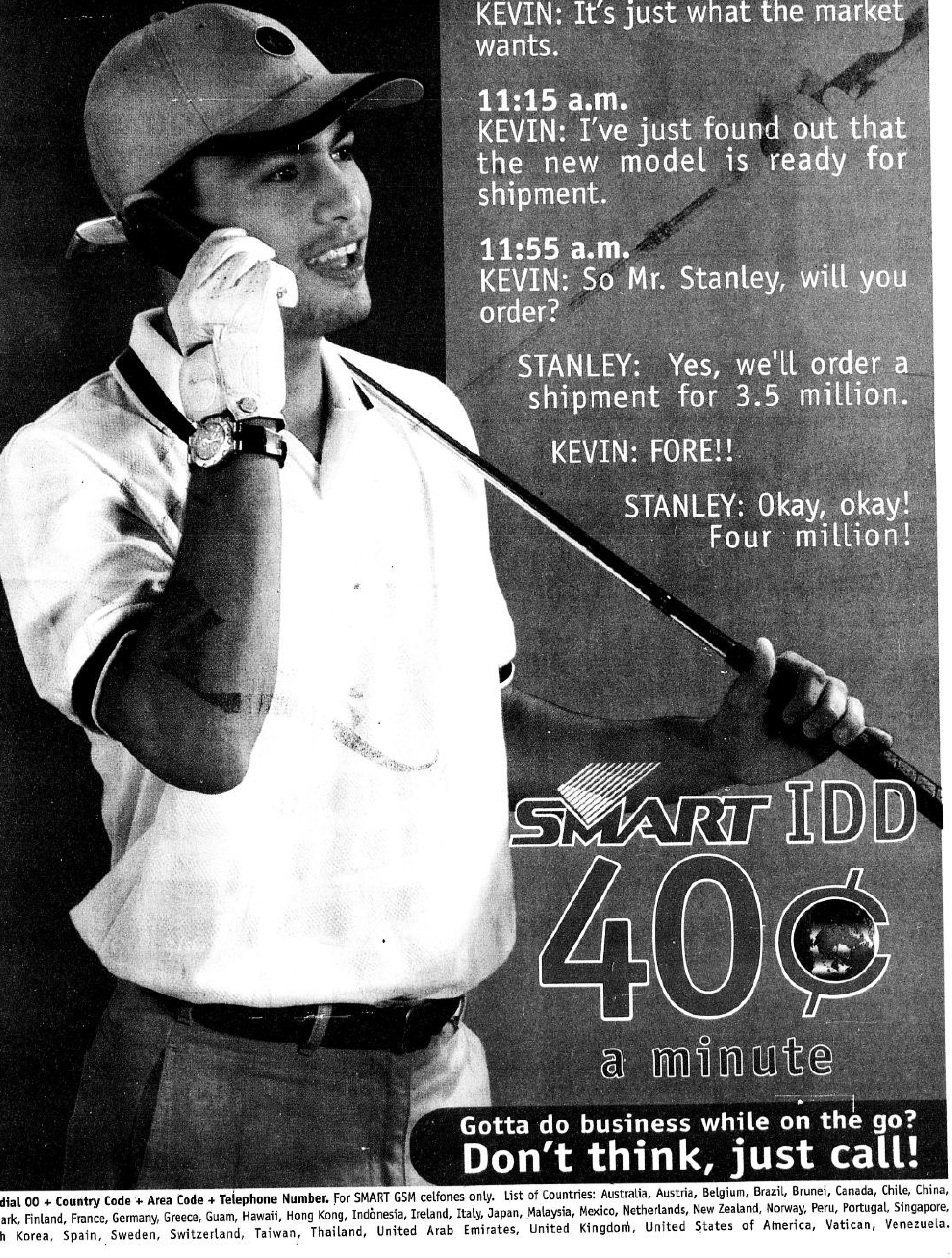
KEVIN: FORE!!

STANLEY: Okay, okay! Four million!



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B1

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Higher economic growth forecast

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

AFTER getting a monkey off the economy's back, businessmen are discarding their economic growth forecasts as they expect an exuberance of investor confidence to fuel economic growth this year.

The Federation of Philippine Industries yesterday painted a brighter economic outlook for the first quarter this year even as the Dec. 30 bombings in Metro Manila further spooked local and foreign investors while factories were forced to cut back production and retrench its workforce.

FPI chair Raul T. Concepcion said GDP should grow 2 percent to 2.5 percent in the first quarter this year, which is sharply higher than his forecast of one percent to 1.5 percent which he made shortly after the Dec. 30 bombings.

Concepcion said he was confident the economy would reach the National Economic and Development Authority's GDP growth forecast of 3.5 percent to 4 percent this year mainly due to a recovery in consumer and investor confidence.

Concepcion said foreign investors would take a more positive look at the Philippines because of what he termed as a sweeping change in the moral standards of Filipinos. "The Edsa movement has had a cleansing effect on a country seen as corrupt and opaque by foreign investors. The onset of a new administration after the old one was booted out because of the people's vehement reaction to the corruption scandal should set us under a new light to foreigners."

But other businessmen were more circumspect on their expectations. Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz said his group would review its growth forecasts for the year following last week's historic events. MBC had previously projected a 2.7-percent to 3-percent growth in GDP this year.

Luz said the MBC would have to gauge how much consumer and investor interest would pick up in the next one or two weeks. "We're looking at how the foreign businessmen would react, including the credit rating agencies," said Luz, who noted that the Philippines could get a ratings upgrade after shaking off the Estrada factor.

However, Luz said there would be "mini-boom" in the stock market this week while the peso should stay below the 50-to-$1 mark depending on how smooth the transition of power would be. "In a way, President Estrada was correct in predicting that the peso would fall to 47 to 46 although this was achieved because he was kicked out of office."

With a recovery in consumer confidence, Luz said he expected loan demand to improve over the next six months while non-performing loans of banks should improve substantially by third quarter this year.

Peso seen to strengthen further this week

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

AS CONFIDENCE in the financial markets return, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas sees the peso strengthening further from 47.50 to $1 and boosting chances of another round of reduction in interest rates in the coming weeks.

"This looks good because the political risk premium should be totally out. The peaceful transition is a boost to confidence as we have proven once again that democracy works in the country," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

Given the likelihood that the peso would improve further in the coming days although chances of a correction today was also great, Buenaventura said monetary authorities would again have a bigger room to cut the BSP's key policy rates.

At the height of the political crisis in the administration of former President Estrada, the risk factor in the peso grew to P8 from about P2-P4 after the "Juetangate" scandal erupted in October.

The BSP chief, who is protected by a six-year term or until July 2005, said he has not been contacted by newly installed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo even as he announced last Friday that the Monetary Board, including himself as chair, has a duty to preserve the financial system.

Buenaventura said he believed that newly appointed Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo was a good choice to take the place of resigned finance chief Jose T. Pardo.

"I can work with him and I know him quite well. I have no orders from the new president yet," Buenaventura said.

Buenaventura said the peso should get back to maintaining a P3 to P4 difference over the Thai baht, which trades at the 43 level. This means the peso could go down to about 46 to $1 in the coming days.

"The general trend should be in the 40s level. And this would pave for a better maneuvering on interest rates," the BSP governor said.

On TV interviews, former central bank Governor Jose Cuisia said he expected confidence to return to the financial markets and the Philippine economy in general.

Former Philippine Stock Exchange president Jose Luis Yulo said the peso should strengthen to 45 to $1 and the stock market should experience a much-needed rebound in today's trading.

Last Friday, the peso dramatically bounced back to its pre-juetengate level of 47.50 to $1 from a historic low of 54.79 to $1 last Thursday, two days

PESO/ B5

INDICATORS

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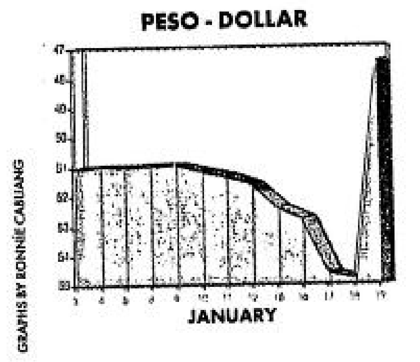


Peso-Dollar Rate

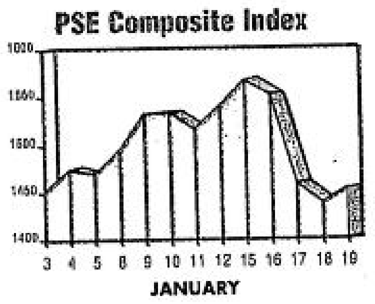
P47.50 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 19, 2001

¥117.90 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 117.90 as of 5 p.m., Jan. 19, 2001

GOLD:$265.90/266.40
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 19, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Stocks seen to surge



EUPHORIA over the settlement of the political crisis during the weekend is expected to send stock prices soaring at the start of the week.

The surge could replicate, if not outperform, the meteoric rise seen last Nov. 6 when share prices gained 16.48 percent following the defection by Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II and key lawmakers led by then House Speaker Manuel Villar and Senate President Franklin Drilon to the opposition.

(See stock market report on Page B6)

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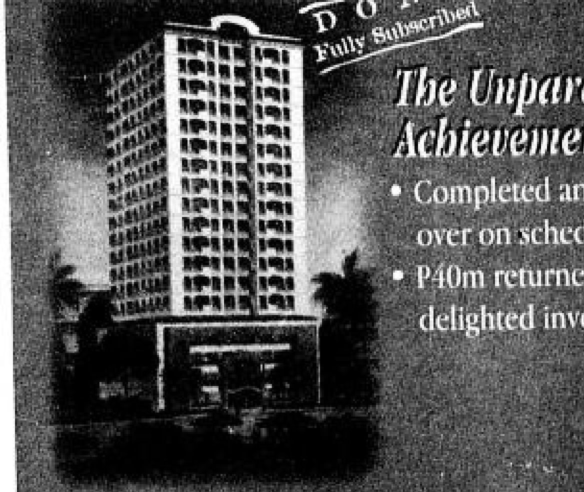

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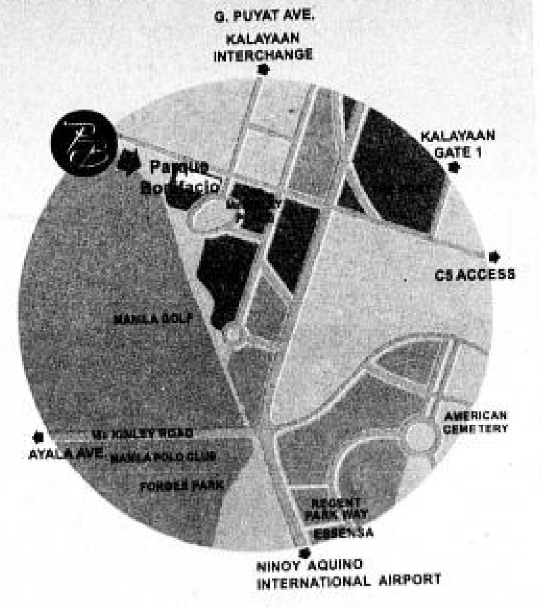

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Local vehicle makers oppose SKD import license of Norkis

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

LOCAL vehicle makers are appealing to Malacañang to cancel the license of DaimlerChrysler and Norkis Automotive Resources Corp. to import semi-knocked down vehicle units at preferred duties.

They claimed the importation was illegal, detrimental to the interest of local auto parts makers, and would result in a big loss of revenues on the part of the government.

In a letter to Malacañang, Philippine Automotive Federation Inc. president Vicente T. Mills Jr. said the automotive industry was alarmed by and concerned over the license granted by former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora to DaimlerChrysler-Norkis to import 1,000 semi-knocked down (SKD) units of Chrysler sport utility vehicles and pickups this year with an option to bring in another 2,500 units in 2002 and 3,500 units in 2003.

Mills claimed that the import license has no legal basis because SKD licenses under the Motor Vehicle Development Program were discontinued under Memorandum Order No. 437 issued on April 1998.

Also, Mills is questioning the 18-month extension of DaimlerChrysler-Norkis' original SKD license to import 500 units, of which only 271 units were brought in since 1998. Mills said that even under the original MVDP rules, SKD imports could only be made for a maximum of 12 months.

But the Board of Investments had earlier opined that an SKD import license could still be obtained with an endorsement from Malacañang. DaimlerChrysler-Norkis' license was approved subject to several conditions imposed by the BOI. This include a commitment to go into full automotive assembly using completely knocked down (CKD) units within 18 months; put up a guarantee for its committed net foreign exchange earnings, and provide a bond to cover for the discount it gets from the preferred duties. DaimlerChrysler, one of the world's biggest carmakers, has been specifically required to make a pledge to back up these commitments.

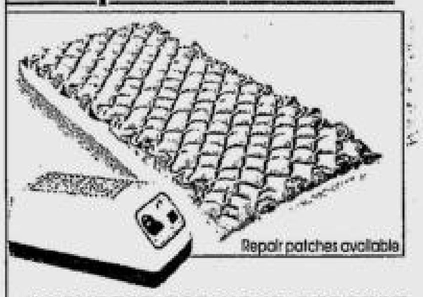
Aside from being unlawful, Mills said the SKD import license "would seriously put into question the program of the government to develop a local parts manufacturing industry." Mills said SKDs are virtually completely built up (CBU) units without tires and batteries and they do not need the automotive parts made by local manufacturers.

"This is in direct conflict with the avowed objective of the government to promote the development of the local car parts industry," Mills said.

Mills said the government would lose substantial amount of revenues in this time of a widening budget deficit because of the 20-percent to 27-percent tariff discount enjoyed by classifying these CBUs as CKDs. CKDs are charged between 3 percent and 10 percent while CBUs are levied 30 percent.

In justifying its SKD import license, DaimlerChrysler claimed that it needed at least three years in developing a reasonable market program within which it could validate its test market and product; and decide which model could be assembled in the Philippines "economically."

On concerns that SKD imports would merely drain the country's foreign exchange resources (since only the tires and batteries would be procured locally), DaimlerChrysler claimed that it was committed to buying automotive parts from the country that would be worth more than the cost of their SKD imports.



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Water in the food basket

MINDANAO ONE

Epimaco Galero Jr.

MINDANAOANS in the agriculture sector get a little uneasy whenever we hear our region extolled as the Philippines' "food basket."

Don't get us wrong, this designation, which was first floated at the 1st Mindanao Food Congress (MFC) two years ago, should make a perfect sense. We have many of the right elements for making Mindanao an outstandingly productive food source for the country: It has a large land base, extensive natural resources, a typhoon-free climate, and a strong agribusiness sector, among many other advantages.

But there are other factors that are absolutely indispensable in maximizing agricultural productivity, one of them being irrigation.

At present, Mindanao still has the lowest rate of irrigation development among the island groups. As of end-1999, only 28 percent or 264,000 hectares of the "irrigable" areas of 959,000 hectares in Mindanao were actually being irrigated—while Luzon has 51 percent (938,584 ha.) irrigated, and the Visayas, 44 percent (147,794 ha.).

Being a "food basket" means being able to produce food well above the needs of the local population (approximately 18 million in Mindanao). In 2000, however, the region's rice production of 1.97 million tons fell short of total consumption placed at 2.02 million tons by 50,000 tons. Mindanao's palay production comprised only 24 percent of national production of 12.3 million tons in 2000.

It is the limited irrigation development in Mindanao which is largely responsible for our low palay yield averaging only at 3 tons per ha., compared to the world benchmark of over 6 tons per ha. in China and Korea, and 4.5 tons in Indonesia.

The Department of Agriculture is aware of the situation, and has devoted increasing attention to Mindanao in recent years. In response to resolutions passed at the Mindanao Budget Summit and the 2nd MFC, the DA raised its total allocation for the region by 19 percent, focusing on rural infrastructure.

The National Irrigation Administration, the main irrigation agency and a component of the DA, estimates that an additional 274,400 ha. will be irrigated nationwide from year 2000 to 2004 under the Medium Term Development Plan, of which 94,600 ha. (34 percent) will be in Mindanao.

This will bring Mindanao's irrigation development by 2004 to 37 percent from 28 percent in 1999, compared to 57 percent (44 percent) for the Visayas, and 59 percent (51 percent) for Luzon. This is not quite what one would consider the appropriate allocation for a national "food basket," but it is still very good news.

Let us keep in mind, however, that even under this irrigation program, Mindanao is expected to produce a surplus of less than 200,000 tons of rice by 2004, adequate for feeding fewer than two million Filipinos outside Mindanao.

Another bad bout with El Niño similar to that of 1998 would be enough to wipe out this surplus, according to Rolly Dy, executive director of the Center for Food and Agribusiness at UA&P.

At a consultative meeting held by the Mindanao Business Council and the Growth with Equity in Mindanao Program last week in preparation for the 3rd Mindanao Food Congress, participants agreed that efforts to shore up the region's food sector have to be stepped up without delay. They advocate expanding the current irrigation program still further, including the rehabilitation of existent irrigation systems.

They are also pushing for more post-harvest facilities and high-quality seed and high-yield varieties be made widely available, to make us at least as competitive as our Asian neighbors.

The Food Congress, which will be held in Butuan from Feb. 20 to 22, will be the main venue this year for determining the nation's food requirements and reviewing existing programs. The event is an opportunity for private sector, national and local government, farmers, and food processors to follow the lead of the DA and come up with an action plan that would truly make Mindanao the nation's major food source, not just in name, but in reality.

(Galero is the co-chair of the Caraga Regional Development Council.)

Anti-securities fraud task force formed

By Elena R. Torrijos

MALACAÑANG has created an inter-agency task force led by the Securities and Exchange Commission to combat securities fraud amid concerns over the rising activities of transnational organized crime groups in the Philippines.

Executive Order No. 331 formed the Anti-Fraud Task Force or ATF under the Office of the President to formulate and implement a concerted program to prevent and control securities fraud.

Under the order, the ATF was given an initial funding of P10 million, which will come from the Presidential Contingency Fund, to cover preliminary programs and activities.

The ATF will be composed of representatives from 13 government agencies and professionals from the business sector. It will have a six-member management committee chaired by the SEC.

The government has noted rising complaints in the international business community that spurious Philippine-based or Philippine-registered companies were committing securities fraud in their jurisdictions. These companies were allegedly owned and controlled by foreign nationals with dubious identities and characters.

Recent studies indicate that transnational crimes such as illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, credit card fraud and cross border securities fraud are interlinked.

The EO gives the ATF the authority to implement strategies to secure and protect vital economic activities such as pre-need, future commodities trading, investment houses, mutual funds, stocks and bonds, gold and currency certificates and notes.

The ATF is tasked to pursue programs and activities in intelligence build-up and networking, law enforcement and prosecution, legislative initiatives, bilateral, regional and international cooperation and advocacy and training.

The ATF will convene 30 days from the effectivity of the order to consider and approve necessary rules and regulations for the EO's implementation. The task force will also share information and data between and among government and support agencies.

The Philippine Center on Transnational Crime shall serve as the secretariat of the ATF with support from the prosecution and enforcement department of the SEC.

Other members of the ATF are the Departments of Justice, Finance, Trade and Industry, Foreign Affairs, Labor and Employment, the National Bureau of Investigation, National Prosecution Office, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Bureau of Customs, Board of Investment, National Economic Development Authority. Professionals from the business sector will also be tapped to join the ATF.

Ecozones post 27% increase in exports

PRIVATE and government-run economic zones continued to fuel the country's dollar earnings as exports from these special business enclaves surged 27 percent in 2000.

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority reported that exports of ecozone locators jumped to $20.025 billion in 2000 from $15.807 billion in 1999.

Peza accounted for more than half of the country's projected $39 billion in total exports generated last year and grew by more than twice the expected 11 percent growth rate for 2000.

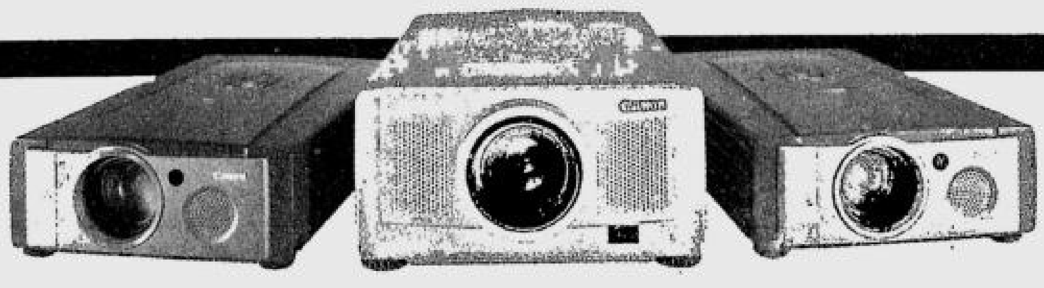
Peza expects exports to remain strong this year based on the steady stream of investments flowing for expansion and new investments in the industrial estates. It earlier reported that total investments climbed 101 percent to P74.056 billion last year from P36.819 billion in 1999.

Peza has eclipsed the Board of Investments as the government's main investment generator as capital inflows into ecozones were nearly double the number of projects registered with the state's main investment promotion agency owing to Peza considerable fiscal perks incentives aside from the quality infrastructure in ecozones.

Based on Peza's report, the 25 private industrial estates accounted for the bulk or 67 percent of exports with $12.732 billion in 2000.

The largest private industrial estate exporters were the Ayala-run Laguna Technopark (up 21.5 percent to $4.615 billion), Carmelray Industrial Park (up 18 percent to $1.803 billion), Gateway Business Park (down 21 percent to $1.652 billion), and Light and Industry Science Park I (up 15 percent to $1.407 billion) and II (up 153 percent to $469 million), and Lima Technology Center (up 68 percent to $313 million).

Peza also reported that all state-owned industrial estate saw their exports grow significantly last year—Baguio City Economic Zone (up 51 percent to $2.857), Cavite Economic Zone (up 24 percent to $2.117 billion), Mactan Economic Zone (up 12 percent to $1.642 billion), and Bataan Economic Zone (up 57 percent to $674.5 million). *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*



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Backroom warriors

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

NOW that you-know-who is out of Malacañang, the identities of the backroom players in the propaganda campaign from both sides of the fence may now presumably be safely disclosed.

Remember the full-page anti-Erap cartoons and the Bantay Senado ads?

Those were produced by ad executive Yolanda Ong and her staff at Campaigns Advocacy PR Inc. of the Campaigns and Grey group.

The pro-Erap ads, on the other hand, were the handiwork of director Manuel "Mr. Shooli" Urbano and ex-Avellana executive Ray David under Advent Asia, the PR and ad agency of Erap brother Jesse Ejercito.

Ramon "RJ" Jacinto and the new Riots Band have, of course, stepped out of anonymity to publicly perform before the Edsa multitudes as the "Ousters Band" of the White and Gray albums fame.

The CD recordings of the twin albums were facilitated by a retired dentist, Bols Erana, who is into the recording business himself, his mother being a De Leon of the LVN Studios fame.

Because of its underground success, Warner Music has agreed to release and market the now-aboveground album.

Lastly, remember the historic bird's-eyeview photograph of the very first Edsa rally in October called by Cardinal Sin and Cory Aquino to support Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson?

That historic photograph, which appeared on Page 1 of the INQUIRER, would not have been possible without frantic overseas phone calls to lawyer Perry Pe and wife Robina Gokongwei, who in turn called cousin Frederick Go to allow INQUIRER photographer Edwin Bacasmas entry into the Gokongweis' Robinsons Galleria office tower.

Taken from the 27th floor, that photograph was a classic photo-finish, snapped at as former President Aquino was winding up her short speech.

The 2nd man

IN addition to San Miguel vice chairman Ramon Ang, the second man inside the office of Erap lawyer Estelito Mendoza that Equitable PCI Bank Clarissa Ocampo referred to is none other than Manuel Lazaro, the lawyer of Erap pal Jaime Dichaves.

The pro-Erap grapevine confirmed that it was then Equitable Bank chair George Go who had set up the meeting, so that Dichaves can sign a new set of Jose Velarde documents and remove the paper trail away from the real Jose Velarde.

Go, we understand, is currently in Hong Kong, where he presumably welcomes fleeing Estrada pals, while the rest of the Go family are cooling their heels in their San Francisco home.

The muscle men

ERAP'S Agrarian Reform Secretary Horacio Morales and Palawan City Mayor Edward Hagedorn were in charge of mobilization of the pro-Erap rallies, just in case you were wondering who provided all those "goons."

Incidentally, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada was at the Peninsula Friday noon while the pro-Erap rallyists were stoning the Cojuangco building and rampaging in Ayala.

Short takes

- THE AQUINOS of Tarlac will hold a clan reunion on Feb. 11. But some of the Aquino elders have already sent advance notice that they would rather stay away from the reunion if Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta would also be there.
- BALIMBING time. A PCGG nominee of Erap pal Jaime Dichaves and a Marcos crony lawyer being investigated by the BIR for tax evasion were on stage with Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during Saturday's swearing-in.

Another Chinoy businessman, who used to play mahjong with Erap during the good old days, was also on stage with the new President.

- LINDEN Suites, the headquarters-hotel of the United Opposition during the Edsa II days, is owned by a company whose president is former Aquino Agriculture Secretary Carlos Dominguez.
- THE GMA economic policy transition team is composed of AIM professors Victor Limlingan and Romulo Neri and former Economic Planning Secretary Cayetano Paderanga Jr.

Heard through the grapevine

- AFTER two failed dailies, PLDT chairman Antonio Cojuangco Jr. is again venturing into the print media, this time with an English newsweekly, Newsbreak, set for launching early next month.
- ERAP'S farewell joke: *"Mga kababayan, wala na akong kamag-anak, wala na akong kaibigan, wala na akong kumpare. Bakit ninyo ako sinubukan?"*

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Equitable to choose an investor this week

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas expects Equitable PCI Bank to choose and announce a new investor or partner within the week to fast-track the recovery of the country's third largest lender.

"I hope they would choose within the week so they could move on to their plans although recent developments would have erased the stigma on the bank," said BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura who met with the head of two state pension funds last Friday.

Buenaventura met with Government Service Insurance System president Federico Pascual and Social Security System chair Carlos Arellano to discuss what he described as a "coherent plan for the sale of the bank."

Equitable evaluated four proposals in its special board meeting last Friday.

The proposals came from Spain's largest Banco Santander Central Hispano SA, foreign venture firm Newbridge Capital Inc., the Metrobank Group backed by Tokai Bank of Tokyo, and the Bank of the Philippine Islands with Development Bank of Singapore.

Banco Santander has denied that it had been approached by Equitable and that it had submitted a proposal to buy into the bank.

The proposals vary from a straight purchase to a share swap, a source described.

Stakeholders of Equitable PCI Bank including the Go family and state pension funds are willing to sell their combined interests of close to 70 percent.

Buenaventura, however, said these groups could sell their interests separately but with the consent of the other parties.

Equitable president Wilfrido Vergara earlier said another option was to get a 20 to 35 percent foreign investor to generate between P12 billion and P15 billion in fresh funds.

The new infusion should help restore the bank's financial health that was significantly affected by withdrawals after it was allegedly used by impeached President Estrada to maintain a secret account under the name of Jose Velarde.

Vergara said the options include the entry of a foreign partner, a merger with a local bank, or both.,

US-based Newbridge Capital Inc. has diversified interests from energy to banking and has a Singapore-based subsidiary.

Second largest Metrobank is reportedly tying up anew with Tokai Bank for its bid to buy Equitable. The two lenders, under a 60-40 deal in favor of the local giant, own Global Business Bank where Metrobank's other acquisitions like Asian Bank and Philippine Banking Corp. were merged.

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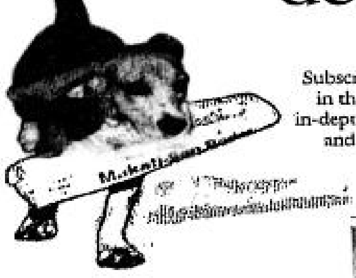

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MORE THAN DOUBLE

Oct. BOP deficit hits $950M

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

AS capital flight became more pronounced in October, the country's balance of payment deficit ballooned to $950 million from $418 million in the previous month.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the deficit in financial account grew to $4.3 billion in October from $3.728 billion the previous month and $287 million a year ago.

The BSP explained that net outflows of short-term credits and net loan repayments overshadowed the favorable performance of foreign direct investments in September and October.

The level of errors and omissions, which some analysts also interpret as an indication of capital flight, increased to $3.4 billion in end-October from $3.05 billion in the same period the previous year.

Net foreign direct investments, which reached $1.394 billion, went mainly into the telecommunications, electronics, automotive component industries, oil exploration and chemical manufacturing.

The portfolio inflows of $187 million in October, generated mainly by the flotation of government bonds abroad, did not help in curbing the deficit.

However, hot money was still on a net outflow level in the first 10 months of year 2000.

Analysts blamed the drastic plunge in financial accounts to the worsening confidence problem of foreign investors in the Estrada administration.

Robust exports of machinery, transport equipment, electronics, and garments boosted the current account surplus of $6.7 billion in October, up $600 million from the previous month.

A current account surplus indicates that export earnings were higher than imports. The surplus in current account as of October was $1.7 billion more than the target.

Exports receipts performed better as the peso deteriorated, making local products cheaper compared to exports of the country's competitors.

Astro del Castillo, head analysts of AA Securities, noted that with the decline in the peso value against the dollar as well as other currencies, it is now cheaper for foreigners to invest in the Philippines.

The gross international reserves stood at $14.412 billion as of end-October rising to $15.1 billion by yearend. This level of reserves could pay for 4.5 months worth of imports.

Inflation to remain at 6.5% to 7% range

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

FORMER Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla has projected that inflation rate in January would not exceed 7 percent despite the sharp depreciation of the peso last week.

In an interview, Medalla said last week's peso freefall, that saw the local currency hitting historic lows, would not adversely impact on inflation this month.

"Inflation should probably rise more in February but for January, it's still possible to attain the original target of 6.5 to 7 percent," he said.

After dropping to the 55 to $1 level, the peso rebounded to 47 to $1 last Friday on news that the military had withdrawn its support to Estrada.

In December, heavy Christmas spending combined with pressures from higher oil prices pushed up the inflation rate to a 19-month high of 6.6 percent from the 6 percent in the previous month.

The December inflation was much higher than the 4.3-percent rate recorded in the same month in the previous year. For the whole of 2000, however, the average inflation rate hit only 4.4 percent, or much lower than the 6.7 percent average posted in 1999.

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DTI not keen on endorsing PNOC's $1.57-B project

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry turned a cold shoulder to a request of the Philippine National Oil Co. for a government endorsement on its combined gas-fired power plant and iron and steel-making facility worth $1.573 billion (P74 billion).

The state-run PNOC said it needed the BOI's endorsement to gain access to multilateral lending agencies in order to bankroll its $1 million to $1.5 million feasibility study which will determine if the project should push through.

PNOC has already made a pre-investment study. It needs a feasibility study to affirm its plan to push through with the project, which it claimed would save the country about $350 million in steel imports and $70 million in oil imports while generating up to 21,000 jobs.

A source said the DTI was standing pat on its agreement with the Presidential Iron and Steel Committee to endorse PNOC's project only if private investors would bankroll it.

PNOC needs the committee's endorsement to obtain incentives from the Iron and Steel Industry Act and from the Board of Investments.

The incentives include access to Official Development Assistance (ODA) financing, tax credits on domestic capital equipment, priority in foreign currency deposit unit (FCDU) loans, and easy financing for utility projects. On top of incentives, PNOC is also assured of favorable tariff protection under the Iron and Steel Industry Act.

In its initial proposal, PNOC planned to finance the project entirely through debt—15 percent from local sources and 85 percent from foreign financiers particularly the Austrian Credit Export Bank and Voest Alpine which have agreed to extend a 13-year loan at 5 percent interest annually.

Voest Alpine will provide PNOC with the Corex technology to produce hot metal from coal and iron ore. Corex is reputedly a new and revolutionary direct smelting reduction process developed by Voest Alpine that is cost-efficient and environment friendly.

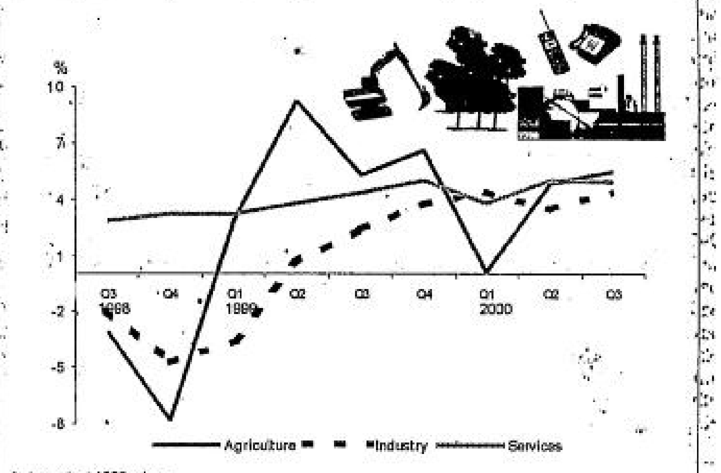
The company is projecting as much as 13.9 percent return on investment and 23.45 percent return on equity from the project. PNOC plans to produce 1.66 million metric tons of steel a year and generate 774 megawatts of power to be sold at competitive rates for industries and rural electrification. The project will also generate 10 million bags of slag (which can be converted into cement to be used for low-cost housing and farm-to-market roads) a year and methanol and urea which can be used for fertilizer and fuel cells.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Growth in agriculture, industry & services*

(3rd quarter 1998 to 3rd quarter 2000, in percent)



* at constant 1985 prices
Source: NSCB

All three sectors of the economy grew in the third quarter 2000. The service sector's consistency in posting positive growth was attributed to the transportation and communications sub-sectors. The slump in the construction industry was offset by the manufacturing sector's strong performance enabling the industry sector to grow 4.1 percent in the first nine months of the year. Forestry has contracted at an average of 15.3 percent this year yet the agricultural sector managed to grow at an average of 3.3 percent.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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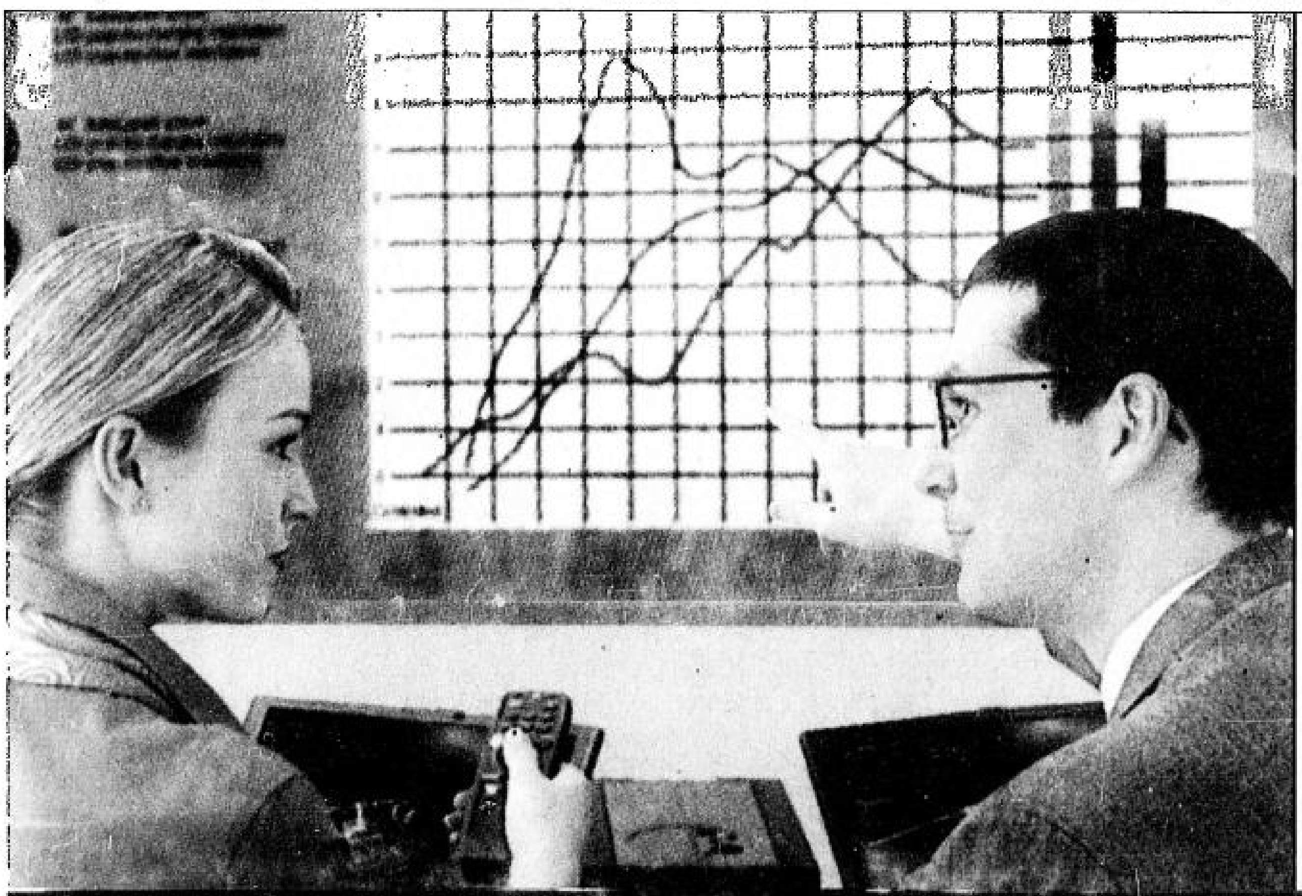
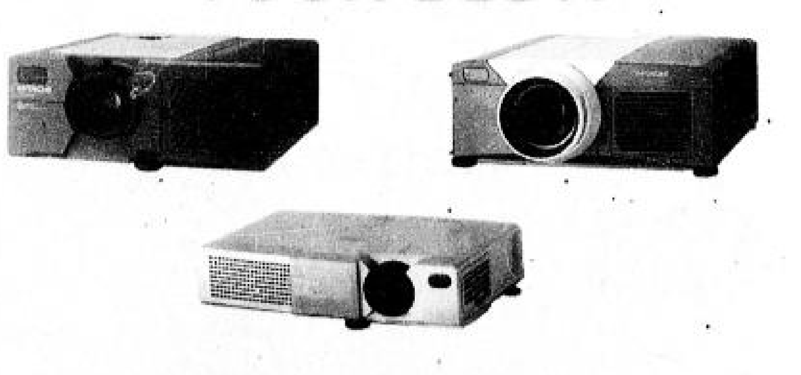
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A loss of faith

ON THE MONEY

John Mangun

THE PHILIPPINES disappeared from the international financial radar screen last week.

In the process, the Philippines may have lost the most important aspect of a democracy. My neighbor, Eddie Bautista, was blistering mad Wednesday night. He repeated over and over in a paraphrase of Ninoy Aquino's famous words, "The Filipino is NOT worth dying for." It is probably true that the individuals that make up a country are not worth dying for. However, history has shown over the last 200 years (since modern democracy was formed) that the institutions of a democracy are worth a huge sacrifice. In fact, wars fought for and on behalf of even the most charismatic leaders are not successful. But if you fight for an institution you have faith in, victory comes much more easily.

What many people lost last week was their faith in our institutions of our democracy. I think this is what my friend Eddie was expressing. Moreover, a democracy is not about people. It is about the institutions that can long endure and which the people can have faith in and from which can derive their true power and protection.

I was both impressed and saddened by the chain of people along Edsa last Thursday. The numbers of people that would make a stand in the belief that the democratic system and its institutions had failed to fulfill its promise impressed me. And I was saddened by that fact that these same people felt failed by the system. If you feel the need to take to the streets, it means you do not believe the system can fulfill its duty. For a democracy to function properly, the institutions must be strong enough to inspire confidence. Good people do not necessarily make good institutions. But good institutions do often make people better. It is true of companies and other organizations. If the institution is strong, healthy, and effective, it hardly matters who the people are that are a part of it. Individuals are only rarely inspiring. But a strong and efficient organization can be.

Although we would like to believe that this person or that person would inspire confidence, the financial markets are not primarily personality based. They derive their confidence from the institutions of this or any other country. And our lack of confidence and trust in the effectiveness and efficiency of our political system is what will keep foreign investors away. Our democratic institutions do not seem to be strong enough to be trusted by either the Filipino or the foreigner.

It is almost the same thing at the Philippine Stock Exchange. We keep hoping for investor confidence in our stock exchange. But no one has that confidence. Part of the reason, both on our political scene and at the stock market, is that personalities are more prominent than the institution. We rarely have regulators and those in positions of authority giving credit to the system. They say "their" efforts are the reason there should be confidence.

It has been almost a year since the PSE report on the alleged price manipulation of BW Resources was released. In the years of the tenure of Yasay at the SEC, and Almadro and Yulo at the PSE, no effective system was put in place to monitor potential price manipulation. These three would like us to believe that BW was the only potential case and they effectively caught the guilty. That is just not true. Price manipulation was rampant in 1996 and 1997. However, through the efforts of a new board of governors and headed by PSE president Garcia, a nameless, faceless group of men and women who are tasked with watching the market, has put into practice a sound and effective institution to mitigate any manipulation. And it has worked. I have personally seen no instances in the last nine months where there has been any significant attempt to improperly influence the trading of shares. Yet, we still have a crisis of confidence. Why?

We have a lack of confidence because we do not have faith in the belief that the institution itself could be sound. We are still looking for that superhero to inspire and convince us that the exchange is properly run. Our stock exchange as an institution is much stronger than it was a year ago. I firmly believe that as long as the authorities follow the rules, the system is strong. We only need to have people who are dedicated to doing their job. But that also applies to government and politics.

Of course, foreign and local investors are concerned who sits in the Palace and in other seats of authority and power. But those personalities are ultimately not as important as the soundness of the institutions that they represent. That is what investors want to see. Can the "system" survive and prosper with a new set of faces? And can it survive and prosper with repeated changes of faces? We were well on the way to proving that until last week. But the faces proved stronger in the eyes of many people than the institutions. Now we must start the process of rebuilding the trust that the Republic is sound and permanent. Until then, the Philippines will remain a footnote in the annuals of world investment. Gaining that investor trust will require more than People Power. Everyone really abhors politicking. Responsible, effective, successful institutions gain notice. "People Power" is a short-term solution to the problems that a democracy can face. We must make sure that the institutions can stand hard and fast. "People Power" is no substitute for strong democratic institutions. It can only be one step toward achieving that goal.

Again, I will be doing an introductory seminar on Technical Analysis on the morning of Saturday, Jan. 27, 2001. For details, please call Mr. Raul Putong at 636-1121 to 35.

(John Mangun can be reached at Fax No. 634-2349 or e-mail at jm@epic.net.)

PHILIPPINE BANKING

Did you know?

...that the king of Spain, Ferdinand VII, issued a decree on April 6, 1828 to establish a public bank in the Philippines to meet the requirements of increasing commerce and trade in the islands?

...that this bank, originally called *El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2*, was organized as a limited stock company along the lines of contemporary state banks in Europe at that time?

...that the bank's first office was located in the Royal Custom House (then called *Aduana*, but later called *Intendencia*) within walled Manila, which is now officially called Intramuros?

...that the bank was originally managed by two elective managers who took turns serving as managing director on an annual basis?

...that about a hundred years later, the *Intendencia* would also house the first Central Bank of the Philippines?

150

Peso seen to strengthen further this week

(From page B1)

after the Senate decided not to allow the opening of the second envelope that was believed to contain key evidence in the impeachment trial against Estrada.

Mere rumors on the defection of military officials led by Armed Forces chief Gen. Angelo Reyes sent the peso zooming to 51.50 from a previous transaction of 54.80 to $1 at about 2 p.m. last Friday.

Once Reyes and Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado were confirmed to have joined the crowd in Edsa, the peso soared to 47 to $1 a minute before closing. The last transaction was, however, crossed at 47.50 to $1.

Buenaventura said the peso's recovery only showed the currency's problem was only political and not economic.

He said the peso's strong rebound was very much attuned to the 47-49 to $1 average for the year that was set by the economic managers. "I told you it would go back to these levels minus the political crisis," he said.

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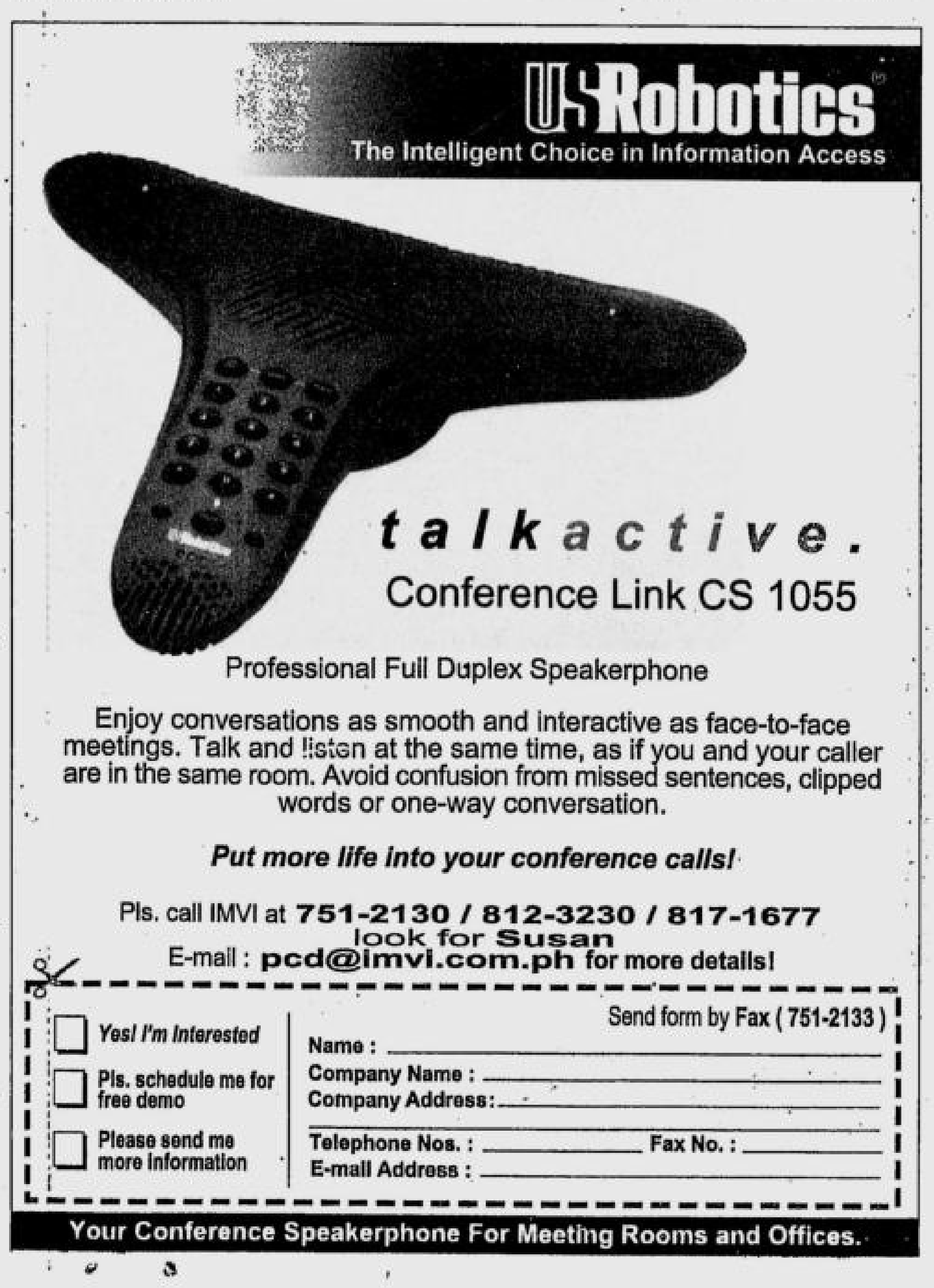
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Stock prices seen surging as political impasse ends

By Doris C. Dumlao

MARKET PLAY

THE LOCAL stock market is expected to open the week with another historic bull run as it cheers the successful ouster of President Estrada through another "People Power."

Analysts expect the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index to at least replicate, if not outperform, the meteoric rise seen last Nov. 6, when it surged 16.48 percent or 212.26 points following the defection by Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II and key lawmakers led by then House Speaker Manuel Villar and Senate President Franklin Drilon to the opposition.

Another similar rally happened back in July 28, 1987, when the Phisix soared 16.3 percent after the original "People Power" revolution—the inspiration behind the recent uprising—toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

The Phisix closed at 1,452.93 on Friday, capping a volatile week resulting from the breakdown of the impeachment process against Estrada. On the other hand, the peso has appreciated to the 47 levels on Friday after dropping to the 55 to $1 on news that the military had withdrawn its support to Estrada.

Securities Specialist president Francisco Villaroman projected that the euphoria over Edsa II would push the index to 1,750-1,800 this week.

"But I would caution people on buying on good news specially since everyone will be trying to buy all at the same time. I expect big gaps from last (Friday's) closing to (Monday's) opening," Villaroman said.

Investors who were dismayed by the turnout of the impeachment trial last week were expected to return to the market with a big bang following the much-awaited change in political leadership.

"This is what we've all been waiting for because the single expression of what has been pulling down market sentiment has been removed," PCCI Securities Brokers Corp. research head Gonzalo Bongolan said.

Eagle Equities Inc. president Joseph Roxas said the Phisix might rise by at least 200 points this week. However, he said volatility was expected in the next few weeks as the market now starts to scrutinize how the new president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would rebuild the economy from the ruins.

Arroyo, who was sworn in as the country's 14th president before a jubilant crowd at Edsa on Saturday, pledged to restore confidence to the economy through a level playing field, leadership by example and a reconciliation program.

Roxas said shares of all blue chips such as Ayala Land Inc., Ayala Corp. and Meralco would likely rise on pent-up demand as the market finally got what it was waiting for.

"As far as the market is concerned, there will at least be a one-month honeymoon period with the new president. I hope the appointment of Cabinet members will be based on merit and ability rather than debt of gratitude," Roxas said.

Although the ouster of Estrada was expected to immediately bring back confidence in the market, the analysts said the new administration still had a lot to do to ensure that the recovery would be sustainable.

Globe, Islacom merger seen completed in April

By Anthony O. Alcantara

GLOBE Telecom has set the financial closing of its merger with Isla Communications Inc. in April 2001 at the earliest after securing the proper government approvals for the transaction.

In a statement, Globe said both companies have completed the necessary changes that would expedite their integration.

"By the end of year 2000, Globe and Islacom had substantially accomplished aligning back office process changes, including billing, credit, information systems, cash management and accounting policies and procedures," Globe said.

There was also a clean-up of Islacom's subscriber base as delinquent accounts were weeded out. A clean-up of the company's balance sheet was also undertaken to prepare for its recapitalization this year.

Islacom's foreign partner, Deutsche Telekom, plans to infuse $250 million into Islacom this year. The German telecom giant has placed the amount in escrow with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas pending regulatory approvals of the integration.

"Changes to Globe's capital structure including various other regulatory approvals are estimated to occur within two months after receiving NTC (National Telecommunications Commission) approval," Globe added.

Globe and Islacom was supposed to consummate their integration before the end of 2000. However, the NTC was still deliberating on the approval, thus forcing the two companies to postpone the plan.

Last year, Globe said it would turn Islacom into a fully owned subsidiary before the end of 2000.

Meanwhile, Globe last week also announced that it would continue to expand and upgrade its network to accommodate more subscribers and prepare to offer new value-added services through the use of third generation (3G) technology.

3G refers to a new technology standard that would allow high data transmission speeds that would make value-added services such as video streaming possible.

Globe said it would be investing $751 million for expansion this year. Last week, the company reported a record net profit of P1.55 billion for 2000 from only P940 million in 1999 as a result of phenomenal subscriber growth.

At present it now has 2.5 million subscribers, almost triple the number of subscribers as of end 1999.

In April 1999, Ayala Corp., Globe's parent company, bought a controlling stake in Islacom for $14 million with the objective of eventually merging Globe with Islacom. Aside from the valuable frequencies of Islacom, the company has a foothold in the Visayas with its local exchange network.

Molasses prices seen to soften

EXCESS supply from Thailand of molasses, a sugar by-product used in the production of animal feeds, alcoholic beverages and human food additives, is expected to usher in a free fall in the commodity's prices in the world market, including the Philippines, in the next few months.

The surplus in Thai molasses output by as much as 400,000 metric tons is seen to exert pressure on Philippine molasses suppliers to lower prices in order to avert a wave of importations by local molasses-dependent companies which consider Thailand and other Asian countries convenient alternatives for sourcing the commodity.

Elsewhere in the world, South Africa is projecting a surplus of nearly 300,000 metric tons this year out of nearly one million metric tons in molasses output. The excess supply will be shipped out to Europe, the United States and Asia.

Thai molasses cost $36 to $37 per metric ton in the last quarter of 2000 as against $52 for its Philippine counterpart. The Thai prices had already dropped from the range of $40 to $45 a few months before as Thai molasses producers sought to compete better with India and Pakistan whose prices were even lower at about $31.

Despite the Philippine peso devaluation which tends to inhibit imports, cheap molasses prices in Thailand and other molasses-producing countries could negate the effects of the expensive dollar on molasses importation.

Molasses prices abroad are expected to further soften on the back of a prevailing weak demand for sugar in Thailand as the new year starts coupled with a robust supply of the latter commodity in India and Pakistan. Increased sugar output from India, the world's leading sugar producer, is expected until the third quarter of 2001.

Molasses has been finding widespread industrial use over the years. In addition to its traditional use as a component for livestock feeds and other related agricultural preparations, it is also highly valued as an ingredient for human food and beverage products.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, January 19, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58.5	60	58.5	60	348,700
China Banking Corp.	750	750	750	750	4,390
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	53.5	54.5	53.5	54	3,435,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	171	180	171	177	324,580
Philippine National Bank	37.5	37.5	36.5	36.5	6,300
Phil. Savings Bank	29	30	29	30	5,900
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1300	1300	1270	1270	2,670
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	142,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1200	1200	1170	1175	3,730
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	45	45	44	44.5	96,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	230,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	670	680	670	680	900
Piltel	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	250,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	350,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	870	870	860	865	153,930
Ivantage Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.032	0.034	0.032	0.033	46,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	46	46	45	45	322,300
Manila Electric Co. B	48.5	48.5	48	48	2,903,100
Petron Corp.	1.2	1.28	1.2	1.28	5,974,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	-	-	-	-	
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	0.73	0.73	0.7	0.7	750,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	110,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	10,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.26	2.26	2.2	2.2	2,658,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	9.6	9.9	9.6	9.9	1,312,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	31.5	32	31.5	32	68,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48.5	49	48.5	49	135,300
San Miguel Corp. B	56	57	56	57	140,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	3,522,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	4,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12	11.5	11.75	1,700
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.004	0.0042	0.004	0.0042	30,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.26	2.16	2.26	15,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	1,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.75	2.8	2.7	2.7	8,195,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	120,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,070,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	500,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	20.5	20.5	20.25	20.5	79,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	10,000
Ionics Inc.	15	15	15	15	100,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.14	320,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	20,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings B	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	20,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.78	0.79	1,300,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.13	0.155	0.13	0.155	20,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.56	690,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44	250,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	1,000,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.28	1,050,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	5,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.3	8,000
Music Corporation	2.8	2.85	2.75	2.85	412,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	7.8	8	7.8	8	206,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.65	0.65	500,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.45	0.51	107,340,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	44	44	43	43	788,500
DMCI Holdings Inc- Pref.	560	560	555	555	120
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.9	3.05	2.85	3	258,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	30,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25*	10.25	1,200
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.5	5.7	5.4	5.5	18,922,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	340,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.195	1,610,000
Cyber Bay Corporation	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.35	0.4	0.35	0.4	39,240,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.38	6,982,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.31	0.36	0.31	0.36	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.4	5.4	42,542,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0048	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	15,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	400,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	15,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0044	0.0042	0.0044	30,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	400,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	4,273,270	274,908,090.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	915,172,367	568,455,818.27
PRO	110,166,000	359,757,030.00
Mining	15,610,000	193,700.00
OIL	45,400,000	260,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	1,090,621,637	1,203,574,638.27

AVERAGES

Banks & Fin Svc	547.44	UP	12.41
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,051.92	UP	14.87
PRO	498.21	UP	7.75
Mining	1,210.12	DOWN	8.39
OIL	1.76	DOWN	0.01
All Shares Index	764.40	DOWN	19.56
Composite	1,452.93	UP	14.72

NO. OF ADVANCES: 34; NO. OF DECLINES: 21; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 25; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 80; NO. OF TRADES: 2,941

CURRENCIES

Jan. 19, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.058985	1.000000	55.0130
Japan	Yen	0.008980	0.008480	0.4665
United Kingdom	Pound	1.561156	1.474200	81.1002
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.136835	0.129213	7.1084
Switzerland	Franc	0.654422	0.617971	33.9964
Canada	Dollar	0.700433	0.661419	36.3866
Singapore	Dollar	0.609489	0.575540	31.6622
Australia	Dollar	0.588489	0.555710	30.5718
Bahrain	Dinar	2.809130	2.652661	145.9308
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.282358	0.266631	14.6682
Brunei	Dollar	0.608962	0.575043	31.6348
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000112	0.000106	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.024513	0.023148	1.2734
UAE	Dirham	0.288355	0.272294	14.9797
Korea	Won	0.000825	0.000779	0.0429
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.944300	51.9488
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.482813	26.5610
France	Franc	0.152450	0.143958	7.9196
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.428505	23.5733
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.068625	3.7753
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.023409	1.2878
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000488	0.0268
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.158820	8.7372
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.00471	0.2591
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005675	0.3122
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.023409	1.2878
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.199014	65.9614

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Baguio Country Club	Please Call	750,000.00	Mimosa C2	300,000.00	-
Capitol Hills	130,000.00	115,000.00	Orchard	350,000.00	Please Call
Camp John Hay	500,000.00	300,000.00	Tagaytay Country Club	500,000.00	480,000.00
Celebrity Sports	220,000.00	210,000.00	Tagaytay Midlands	880,000.00	800,000.00
Eagleridge A	-	350,000.00	Tagaytay Highlands	-	1,050,000.00
Fontana C	160,000.00	-	Filipinas Golf	300,000.00	-
Fontana D	90,000.00	-	Tivoli Royale	230,000.00	-
Forest Hills A	290,000.00	PleaseCall	Wack-Wack	Please Call	6,500,000.00
Forest Hills C	PleaseCall	-	Valley Golf	Please Call	Please Call
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Baguio Country Club	700,000	800,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	85,000	100,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	130,000
Camp John Hay	350,000	400,000
Canlubang	800,000	850,000
Canyonwoods	-	400,000
Capitol Hills	115,000	135,000
Cebu Country Club	2,030,000	2,300,000
Celebrity Sports Club	200,000	220,000
City Sports Club Cebu "A"	-	709,500
City Sports Club Cebu "B"	-	764,500
City Sports Club Cebu "C"	-	1,226,500
Club Filipino	-	330,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	260,000
Evercrest "A"	-	130,000
Forest Hills "A"	245,000	280,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	370,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	450,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	400,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	500,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	18,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	13,500,000	15,000,000
Manila Polo	2,600,000	-
Manila Southwoods "A"	800,000	850,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	800,000	900,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	200,000
Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Ind./Corp.)	Please Call	Please Call
Montemar (Corp.)	-	55,000
Montemar (Ind.)	-	40,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "B"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	Please Call
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	130,000
Quezon City Sports Club	230,000	250,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C"	Please Call	Please Call
Sta. Elena "A"	1,800,000	1,900,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,900,000	2,400,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corp.)	-	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Ind.)	-	Please Call
Tagaytay Country Club	450,000	480,000
Tagaytay Highlands	1,000,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	860,000	900,000
Valle Verde (Ind)	160,000	-
Valley Golf	280,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	7,100,000	-

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Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	65,000
Manila Southwoods	50,000	Tivoli Royale	20,000
Makati Sports "A"	35,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	600,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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Highlands Club	475,000
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4.	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	150,000	
5.	CAMP JOHN HAY	400,000	320,000
6.	CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	850,000	
7.	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	120,000	
8.	CELEBRITY CLUB	220,000	200,000
9.	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	490,000	450,000
10.	CLUB FILIPINO	340,000	320,000
11.	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	250,000	220,000
12.	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	400,000	390,000
13.	EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	
14.	FAIRWAYS & BLUEWATER	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
15.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	300,000	260,000
16.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	850,000	
17.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	
18.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	500,000	400,000
19.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	500,000	
20.	MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP)	17,000,000	
21.	MANILA POLO CLUB		2,600,000
22.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	1,000,000	850,000
23.	MANILA YACHT CLUB	650,000	
24.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	170,000	
25.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	200,000	160,000
26.	MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	500,000	
27.	MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (CORP)	900,000	
28.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	Pls. Call	250,000
29.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
30.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
31.	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	240,000	
32.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	290,000	
33.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	500,000
34.	ROYAL NORTHWOODS	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
35.	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"		1,500,000
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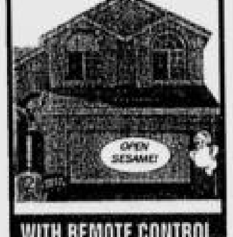

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Politics of impeachment

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

FATHER Bernas said it first in public. At a luncheon meeting of the Makati Business Club, he said impeachment was a political, not a judicial, act. At the Estrada impeachment trial, the thought was echoed repeatedly by the senator-judges. Father Bernas and the senator-judges drew from the American experience in three presidential impeachment cases. Let us visit these cases.

The first case was against Andrew Johnson. Upon the assassination of Abraham Lincoln on April 15, 1865, Vice President Johnson succeeded to the presidency. By May 23, he and General Grant stood side by side to watch the Grand Armies of the Republic pass in review down Pennsylvania Avenue to celebrate North's victory over the South in the Civil War.

Soon after, Democrat Johnson's trouble with Congress began. They could not agree on how to bring back the former rebel states back into the Union. The situation got worse when the Republicans gained control of the Congress the following year. Johnson vetoed bill after bill and Congress over-rode his vetoes.

Also, Congress used every device to restrict the powers of the president. One of these devices was the Tenure of Office Act. Johnson decided to test its constitutionality by firing the Secretary of War, who was friendly to the Republicans. This was the pretext used in impeaching Johnson. The Senate acquitted Johnson by a one-vote margin.

The second case involved Richard Nixon. The Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate apartment complex was broken into by a small group of former CIA-types who were traced to Tricky Dicky. The subsequent cover-up pointed to the topmost members of the White House staff. Two reporters, whose names I do not recall and who were awarded the Pulitzer Prize for their coverage of the scandal, got inside information from someone they called Deep Throat at clandestine meetings in the depths of an underground parking lot.

Nixon escaped impeachment by resigning. The successor he named, Gerald Ford, gave him a full pardon. It is interesting that, although Nixon left Washington in disgrace, he eventually recovered his prestige and reputation by acting as an elder statesman.

The third case was, of course, Bill Clinton. He was accused of fooling around, in the Oval Office of all places, with Monica Lewinsky, a 20-year-old White House intern. He was also caught lying on nationwide TV ("I did not have sex with that woman."). The Republican-dominated Senate acquitted the Music Man when the Democrats voted solidly behind their beleaguered leader and some Republicans crossed party lines.

It is easy to see that these three impeachment cases were political acts. They must have been because, from the eyes of Filipinos, the charges looked petty, especially when leveled against the president. What was the fuss all about?

Now, contrast these cases with the Estrada impeachment case. First, there was nothing petty about the charges of corruption, bribery, betrayal of public trust, and culpable violation of the Constitution. Some of the charges even had sub-charges. The sums involved ran into billions of pesos. Any one of the charges was serious enough to boot the president out of office. Second, in spite of the prosecution's bumbling and ill preparation, the mounting evidence was overwhelmingly devastating. The witnesses—from Chavit Singson to Clarissa Ocampo to Edgardo Espiritu and all the lovely ladies in between—were all totally credible.

The senator-judges should have realized that their decision could no longer be made on purely political considerations. The case was no longer administrative for removing the president, but criminal for sending the culprit to a long jail term.

And so, when the Dirty Eleven voted to prevent the opening of the second envelope, the Filipino did not stand for it. The suppression of the truth led to People Power Revolution Two. Lightning struck for the second time in the same place.

Let market determine fuel prices, oil firms tell GMA

By CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

LOCAL oil firms are asking the new administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to avoid intervening to keep domestic fuel prices artificially low.

"We hope that the new President, with her background as an economist, would weigh carefully the effects and benefits of using suasion in configuring local prices," Coastal Corp. chief operating officer Rick Reyes said in an interview.

Petron Corp. president Jose Syjuco said oil firms were hoping that Ms Macapagal would keep the status quo with regard to the oil industry.

"We have high hopes that a healthy business environment would be provided for by the new administration that would enable businesses to thrive," Syjuco said.

Despite a law that dismantled state control of the oil industry, former President Estrada had regularly used his position to discourage the country's oil firms from raising their prices to avoid exacerbating his administration's political problems.

Jojo Gonzales, an economist with Merrill Lynch and Co. Inc., said "limiting the increase of domestic fuel and electricity prices had also been an encumbrance in the profitability of local refiners and power distributors."

"We fear that if fuel prices remain politicized, it will discourage investment in the oil industry in particular if not in the Philippines in general," Gonzales said.

Meralco to spend less due to rates hike delay

THE MANILA Electric Co. said it would spend slightly less this year than it did last year because it had not been able to raise its rates.

"Our budget could be higher than P8 billion if we were granted an increase in our basic rates," Meralco senior vice president Daniel Tagaza said in an interview.

Meralco treasurer Rafael Andrada said Meralco's budget this year was P5 million lower than last year's.

Andrada said Meralco would spend P2 billion on getting new customers and the rest would go to system enhancement and two new power substations in Manila.

Tagaza said although sales grew by 7 percent last year, Meralco's net income probably fell by 5 to 10 percent "because the earnings have been rechanneled to pay off some loans and for some maintenance and operating expenditures."

Meralco is asking the Energy Regulatory Board for a 30-centavo-per-kilowatt-hour increase in its basic rates.

The ERB said it would allow Meralco to raise its rates but the adjustment would be less than what the utility firm was asking.

Tagaza said Meralco was hoping the ERB would approve its petition this quarter.

Meralco has been under pressure from its creditors to improve its profitability. In exchange for loans, the company was required to maintain a return-on-rate-base—its profits in relation to its assets and liabilities—of 8 percent.

Meralco's RORB fell in 1999 to 5.1 percent from 7.6 percent in 1998.

Malampaya tops Shell prospects for the year

THE SHELL group in the Philippines said the year 2001 would be a significant and exciting year for its member-companies.

Shell chair Oscar Reyes said the completion of the $2-billion Malampaya natural gas project sometime in the third quarter would top-bill the group's accomplishments this year.

The project is expected to generate some $15 billion in royalties for the Philippine government in the next 20 years.

"Clearly, the financial stake and the size of Shell in the Philippines will assume a much greater dimension in 2001 and beyond," Reyes commented.

Equally significant is the positive indication of oil in the Malampaya structure's rim. An early well test of the Malampaya oil rim is scheduled by the middle of the year to enable limited oil production and provide the basis for evaluating the feasibility and attractiveness of investing in the necessary production infrastructure.

Any oil that can be produced from the Malampaya structure is expected to further boost expected government revenues from the project.

The deregulation of the oil industry has challenged the operations of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation, Shell's oil refining and marketing company in the Philippines, to introduce new initiatives that will strengthen its leadership in the market. Pilipinas Shell accounts for about 35 percent of the fuels market.

Last year, Pilipinas Shell launched three mega-stations. Three Shell Tollways Plaza sites were identified and aimed at solidifying the company's stronghold on the fuels business in service stations at the same time enhancing its non-fuels businesses including its chain of Select convenience stores.

Primary concern in the refining and marketing business sector is to "sustain operating viability and the economic incentive to invest the massive sums required in refining, distribution and marketing interests," Reyes said.

With the implementation of the Clean Air Act, "more environmentally friendly fuels" will be introduced, Reyes added.

Shell in the Philippines is also keenly looking at two new sectors in its business portfolio. Currently, Reyes said that Shell is "determining the way forward for a role in the development of domestic downstream gas and related power markets."

Shell's Malampaya project will be supplying natural gas to three big power plants that will provide electricity to the Luzon grid. It will also be operating the 504-kilometer pipeline that will bring natural gas from offshore Palawan to Batangas.

Another area of focused study is the development of markets for solar and/or hybrid systems for barangays and individual home units undertaken by a recently incorporated operating company, the Shell Renewables Philippines Corp.

"We will definitely grow our presence in the Philippines, and all of these developments will constitute a rich addition to our 87-year history in the country," Shell's country chair noted.

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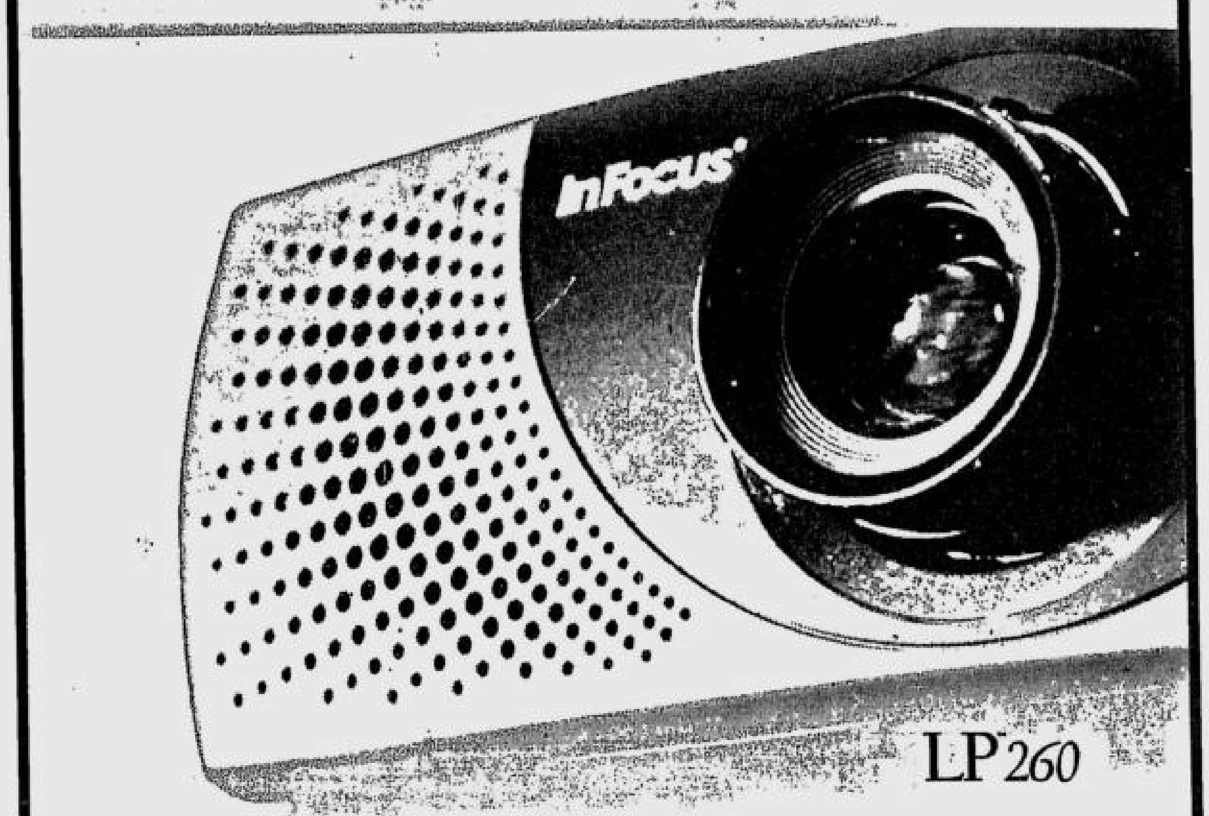

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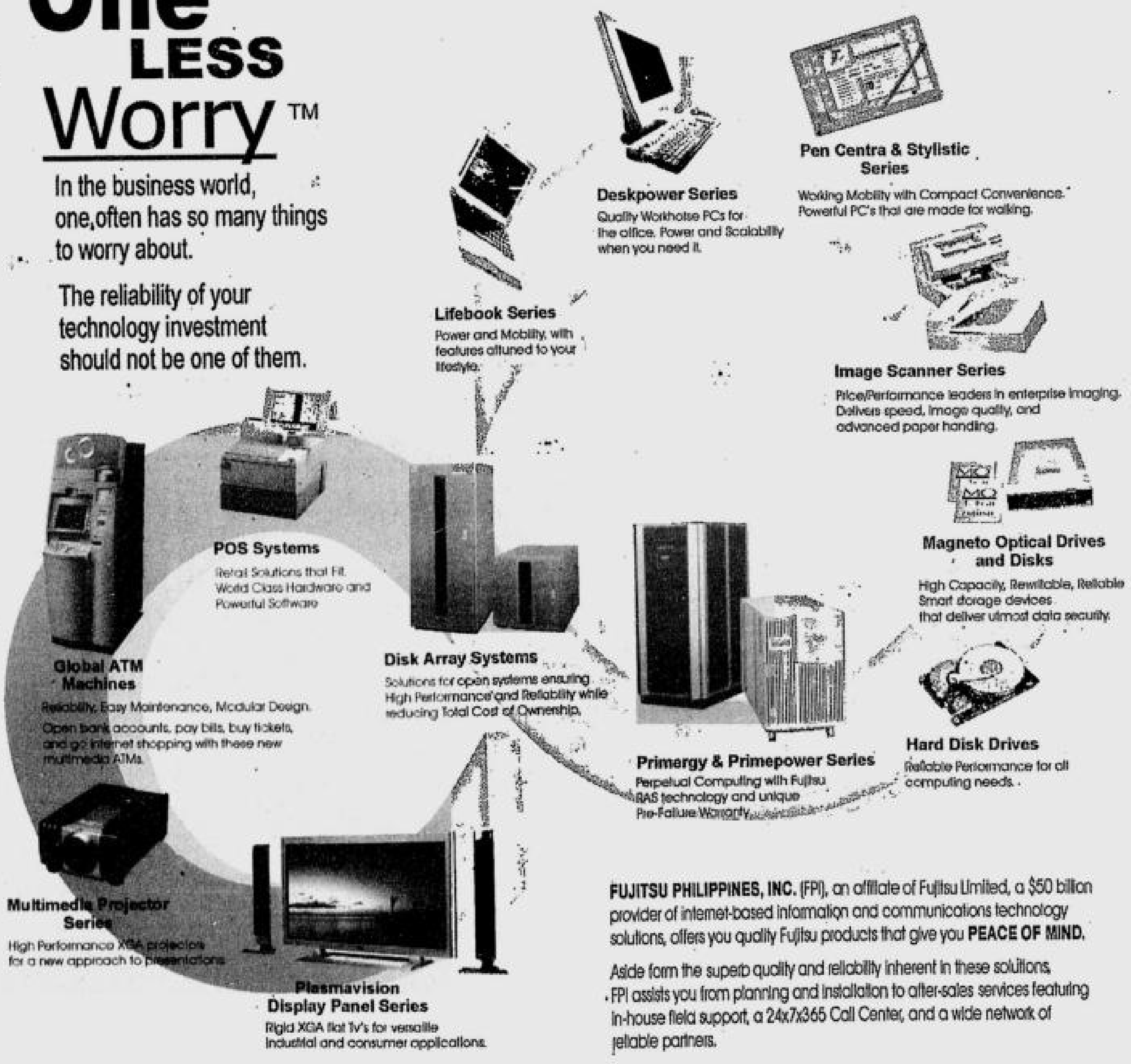

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US trade gap shrank in Nov.

WASHINGTON—The US trade deficit shrank for the second straight month in November as imports and exports declined, the government said Friday in a report that affirmed expectations of further interest rate cuts.

While the commerce department report appeared to be good news for the United States, which had seen its trade deficit soar to fresh records in recent months, closer inspection showed bleak prospects for the world's richest economy.

The report showed imports falling—a sign that buoyant domestic demand was waning—but with exports also falling, a sign of flagging growth overseas, the report gave a gloomy view of global growth prospects.

The commerce department said the monthly trade deficit—reflecting the fact the United States imports more than it exports—narrowed in November to $32.99 billion from $33.55 billion in October. During November, imports of industrial supplies, capital goods and automobiles all posted declines.

The November deficit, which marked the first time the deficit shrank two months in a row since a contraction between May and July of 1997, was broadly in line with the $32.94-billion deficit expected by economists.

Total imports of goods and services fell one percent in November to $123.35 billion from $124.68 billion in October. Commerce noted that the $1.6-billion decline in imports of goods, when measured on a so-called census basis, was the largest decline since a $1.9-billion fall in February of 1991.

Total exports dipped 0.9 percent to $90.36 billion from $91.13 billion in the previous month.

"Across-the-board declines in November for both imports and exports argue for a fairly pessimistic view of the world economy," said Bill Cheney, chief economist at John Hancock Financial Services in Boston. "As we slow down, we may be taking the rest of the world down with us."

Cheney was among those who had hoped that with the US economy slowing, overseas economies would help pick up the slack, giving American producers a market for their goods.

"We may be facing a general global slowdown. We have been the engine of growth for the rest of the world for the past decade, but now we may be running out of steam," Cheney said, adding: "This adds to the case for further easing by the Fed."

With the US economy slowing faster than most experts had anticipated, the powerful US Federal Reserve slashed interest rates by a half a percentage point in early January in an effort to head off a possible recession. At the Fed's policy meeting at the end of January, the smart money was on another cut in interest rates with a signal of more cuts ahead.

That sentiment was strengthened by the University of Michigan's consumer sentiment report, which plunged in January after hitting two-year lows in December.

The report is released only to subscribers. Sources said the survey said the sharp drop in sentiment in the last two months were similar to the declines that preceded the recessions of the early 1990s and the early 1980s.

"The survey certainly underscores the notion that the economy has undergone an abrupt transition from rapid growth to something altogether different," said David Resler, chief economist at Nomura Securities International.

The preliminary January consumer sentiment index slid to 93.6, much weaker than the 99 reading forecast by economists, from 98.4 in December—a level not seen since October 1998, when a Russian devaluation roiled global financial markets.

The fall in the confidence index sparked a rally in short-term US treasury securities, sending yields tumbling. *Reuters*

Fed officials quelling fears of US recession

RICHMOND, Virginia—Everybody takes a deep breath and calm down.

That's what Federal Reserve officials have been urging investors, consumers and, most of all, private economists to do in recent weeks to halt recession fears before they become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The latest effort came from Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond president Alfred Broaddus, who on Friday said while the US economy had clearly slowed, there were few signs "of a sharp, across-the-board decline in economic activity."

Broaddus said he expected the record-long US economic expansion—now in its 10th year—to remain on track, albeit at a slower pace, in 2001. In other words: No recession.

But Broaddus and the others at the central bank are having a hard time injecting cheer into the markets. Just as quickly as a new Fed official comes out with a positive economic outlook, another private economist announces that the US economy is already contracting or about to.

Although not a majority, a handful of major Wall Street firms now expect the economy to stop growing this quarter, among them Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, which predicts a recession for the first half of the year. A recession is commonly defined as two consecutive quarters of contraction.

And the recession fears are not just limited to those who study numbers for a living. *Reuters*

Shooting US films elsewhere hurts economy

LOS ANGELES—A just released federal study details what entertainment industry people have said for years—that studios are taking billions of dollars a year from the US economy by shooting films and television shows outside the country.

The practice, known as "runaway film production," is fueled by countries like Australia and Canada offering huge tax incentives to studios willing to shoot there.

"Runaway film production has affected thousands of workers in industries ranging from computer graphics to construction workers and caterers," Commerce Secretary Norman Mineta said in a statement about the report, which was released Friday, the last day of the Clinton administration. "These losses threaten to disrupt important parts of a vital American industry."

The report does not recommend specific solutions but does mention some from people in the industry, including federal and state tax credits for filmmakers, loans for independent film companies, and the creation a federal film commission.

An earlier, industry-funded report that said the percentage of films from major studios produced outside the country jumped from 29 percent in 1990 to 37 percent in 1998.

The industry study also said that $10.3 billion in direct expenditures, wages and taxes were lost in 1998 because of foreign production.

"This report simply confirms what most of us already knew," said Rep. Xavier Becerra, whose congressional district includes part of Hollywood. "The stakes are really high. If we are not careful, we'll see Hollywoods in Canada, Australia, London and it will be even tougher to compete."

Nippon Steel sees tie-up with Usinor

TOKYO—Japanese steelmaker Nippon Steel Corp. was considering a tie-up with France's Usinor, but no official agreement had yet been reached, the Tokyo-based manufacturer said Saturday.

The two countries' largest steelmakers planned initially to bring into line specifications for steel sheet for automakers and jointly develop new steel sheet products, moves that would give each greater access to the other's local markets, the Nihon Keizai business daily reported Saturday.

The companies were expected to gradually expand the scope of the tie-up to cover basic research and later launch joint ventures in third countries, the report said.

Tokyo-based Nippon Steel said in a release that it had decided to go forward with the deal, but that it would decline further comment until Jan. 23, after an agreement was signed with Usinor.

Steelmakers are looking to put in place global supply networks that can deliver products with common specifications as automakers build factories around the world. Japan's Toyota Motor Corp., for example, will start operating a plant in France this month.

Nippon Steel, the world's second largest steelmaker, agreed last year to form a strategic tie-up with South Korea's Pohang Iron and Steel Co., the world's largest maker of the metal.

The tie-up with Usinor, the world's third largest, would further help Nippon Steel ensure supply to large customers around the world, the Nikkei said. *AP*

Daewoo unit to repay debt

SEOUL—Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering Co. said it would repay 200 billion won ($157 million) in debt this year, a move that might boost investor confidence in the world's second-largest shipbuilder.

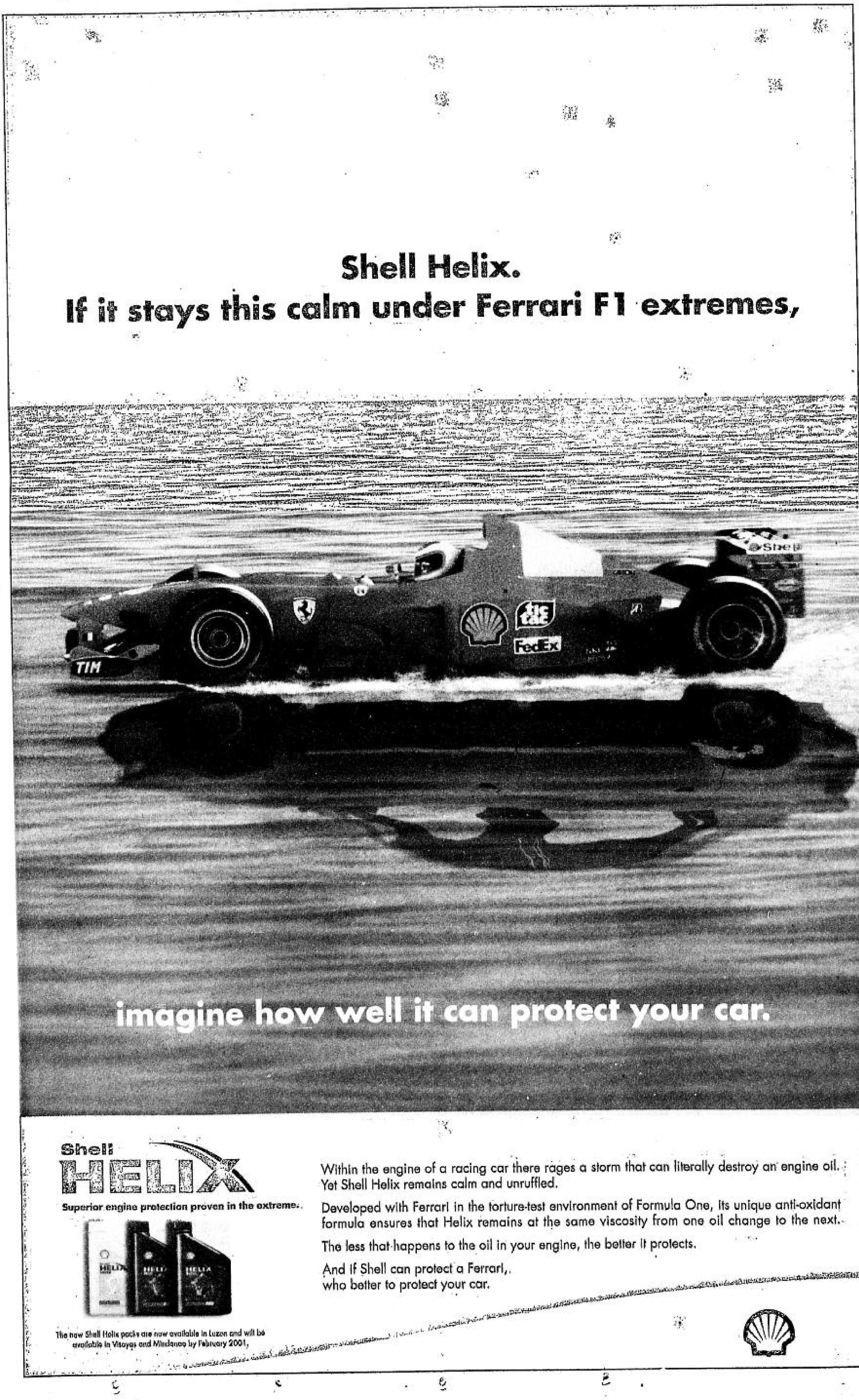
The company also planned to ask creditors to resume normal lending this year after an improved performance allowed it to make payments on debts that had previously been rescheduled, Daewoo said in a statement.

"We expect a remarkable earning performance this year," Daewoo said in the statement. "We want to reward creditors and shareholders who have borne our financial problems."

Daewoo Shipbuilding was created last October when Daewoo Heavy Industries Co. split into three units in the aftermath of the near-collapse of what was once Korea's second-largest industrial group.

The company has benefited from freight rates that rose to decade-highs last year, prompting shipping lines to order more vessels, and the cutting of ties to money-losing Daewoo units.

The company said it would be the first of Daewoo's 12 main units able to meet its debt obligations without selling off assets. Daewoo Shipbuilding plans to have its shares listed on the Korea Stock Exchange by the end of this month. *Bloomberg*



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IPOs kick off this week; hot February seen

NEW YORK—The 2001 season for initial public offerings will kick off this week, as three companies bring the year's first IPOs to market and at least six others prepare to hit the road to meet with investors before February sales.

An interest rate cut by the Federal Reserve and a rebound in stocks have set the stage for a revival in IPOs, perking up demand for new issues. Companies are already taking advantage of financing in other markets where investor appetite has returned: $5.8 billion has been raised in high-yield bonds, convertible sales have already exceeded $2 billion and four companies have completed secondary stock sales.

"We're certainly seeing more of an opening in the market," said James Miller, co-head of US equity capital markets at Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. "Sentiment in general is improving."

That said, with last year's IPO losses still fresh in investors' minds, bankers are bringing out only what they consider to be their best and brightest—companies that are profitable, or almost profitable. The young, Internet companies with scant revenue that were snapped up last year are being replaced by companies such as Peet's Coffee and Tea Inc., which hopes to capitalize on the stellar IPO performance of predecessors Krispy Kreme Doughnuts Inc. and California Pizza Kitchen Inc.

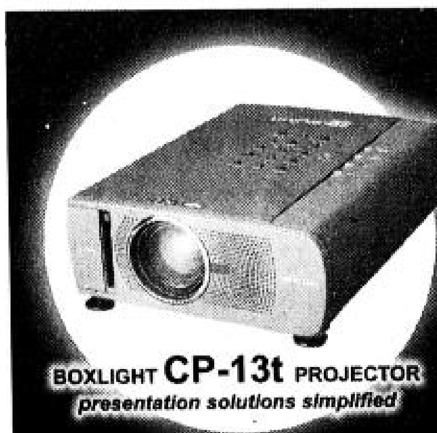
WR Hambrecht and Co. will manage its first IPO in eight months with next week's sale by Peet's, whose 8,000 gourmet coffee houses in the US compete against Starbucks Corp. Biotechnology company Xenogen Corp. and Align Technology Inc., which makes invisible braces for teeth, are also slated to sell.

Lehman is preparing sales for ATP Oil and Gas Corp. the week after next and Third Wave Technologies Inc. in the first week of February. Miller at Lehman wouldn't comment on the sales. Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and Co. is planning the now reduced $2-billion sale for KPMG Consulting Inc.

Credit Suisse First Boston's technology group plans to take three companies public, possibly in the first week of February, said Bill Brady, head of equities for the group.

"People are planning to bring out their top companies, the ones that are profitable or very close to it," Brady said.

Bloomberg



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Silicon Valley job growth cooled in 2000

SAN FRANCISCO—Some have dubbed Silicon Valley, with its booming high-tech economy and seeming ability to produce Nasdaq millionaires like some places raise crops, the Valley of Dreams.

But that American dream, where pluck and hard work used to be rewarded by riches and a home on the range, is turning into fleeting paper wealth and a condominium, as the latest report from a non-profit Silicon Valley policy group shows.

In 2000, overall job growth cooled down to a precook 1995 level, while average rents still increased 26 percent, according to a report released Friday by Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network.

"The overall economy is very diverse, which gives it a certain resiliency," said Kim Walesh, a director at Collaborative Economics, an economics research group that put together the Joint Venture report. "But we're not going to see the very exceptional growth rates that we've had in the last five years."

The veritable bonanza of jobs may be slowing, but housing remains scarce—and expensive. Only 16 percent of houses were affordable to households at the Silicon Valley median-income of $87,000.

That compares to the rest of the United States, where 60 percent of homes are affordable at a much-lower median income of $50,200.

"Housing has become a serious crisis," Walesh said.

Six times as many jobs were created as new homes in the Valley in the last eight years. And according to Walesh, the number of new houses approved in 2000 by Valley city governments actually declined 50 percent from the previous year, as cities wooed retailers rather than housing developers because of the higher tax revenue.

"Strong political opposition plus no financial incentive leads to very little new housing," said Ruben Barralles, chief executive and chair of Joint Venture.

While the numbers are hardly any surprise to anyone who lives or works in the Bay Area, they put into focus what many have long suspected.

Employment grew an estimated 3 percent in 2000, compared to an average of 4.6 percent for the five prior years.

Still, the news is hardly all bad. For the third year in a row, the software industry continued to lead in job creation, with the $125,000 average wage for a software worker topping the $117,000 of the typical semiconductor worker.

"Chips are no longer king," Barralles said. "You could rename this place Software Valley."

The productivity of the typical Valley employee, at $127,100, is also about double the national average. This helped the region's average wage increase by 9 percent in real terms to $66,400 in 2000. That compares to the national one-year gain of 2 percent to $36,200.

"We've been running a temperature for the last five years," said Walesh.

To compensate for the housing crunch, higher-density housing such as condominiums and town homes located near public transportation, is becoming much more accepted by city planners and residents, said Walesh.

That is important as young, work-obsessed techies mature and begin to take stock of their lives.

"Despite the challenges, this is still an attractive place for people to work and live," Barralles said.

Reuters

Web surfing on the wane

NEW YORK—Despite a big jump in Internet commerce, a new study shows Americans have been steadily spending less time surfing the Web at home and at work in the past few months.

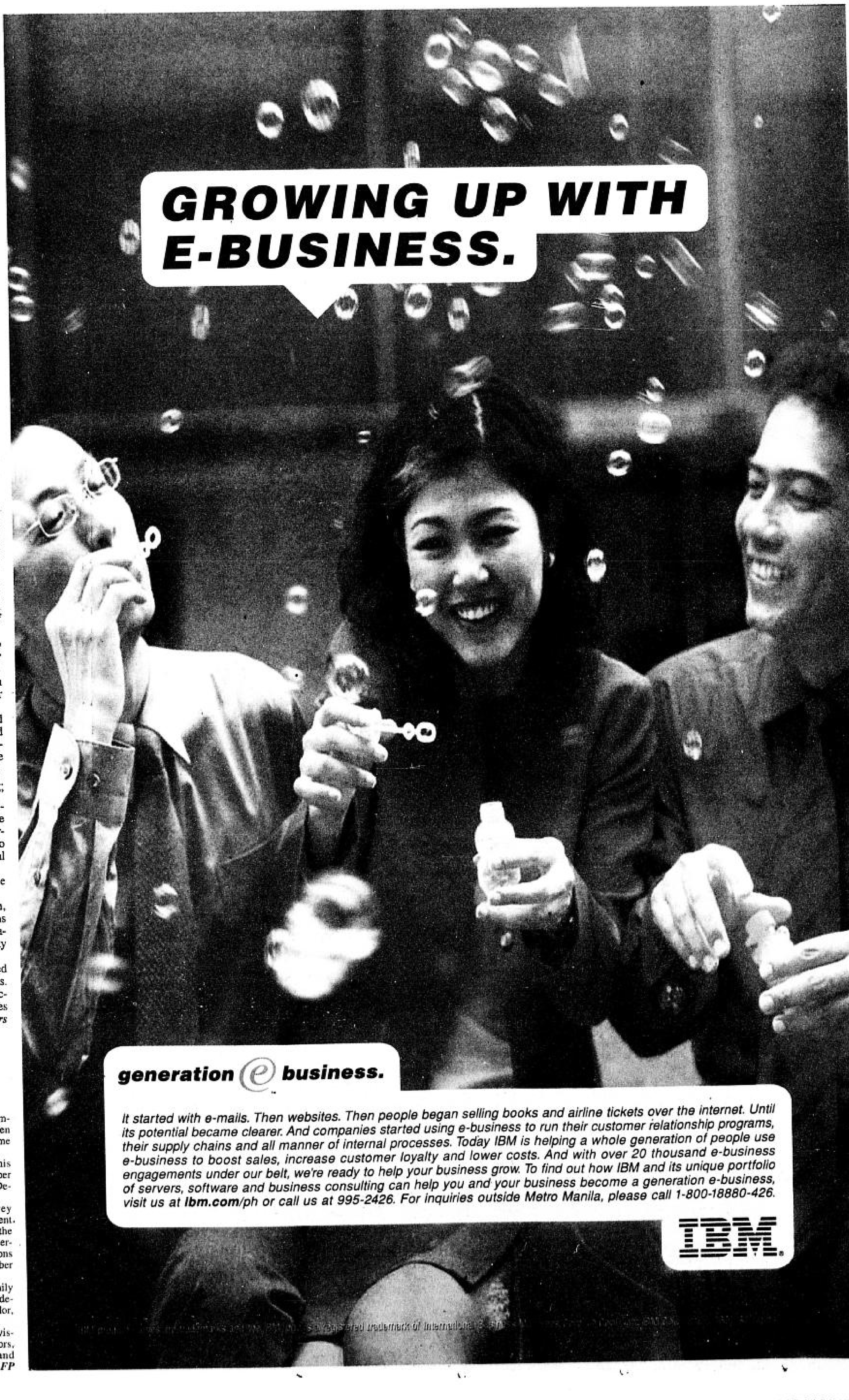
The Nielsen/NetRatings survey released this week found the average time spent per person per month online declined more than 15 percent in December from October, from 17.5 to 14.9 hours.

Usage declined in all categories, the survey found. Page views declining more than 17 percent from 1,196 in October to 983 in December, and the number of unique sites visited per month fell 15 percent from 20 to 17. The number of surfing sessions per month decreased 15 percent from 33 in October to 28 in December.

"Vacation time from work combined with family events and travel were the likely drivers of the decrease in Web usage in December," said Sean Kaldor, vice president of eCommerce at NetRatings.

America Online websites remained the most visited on the Internet, with some 70.9 million visitors, followed by Yahoo, Microsoft's MSN and ExciteAtHome.

AFP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INFOTECH

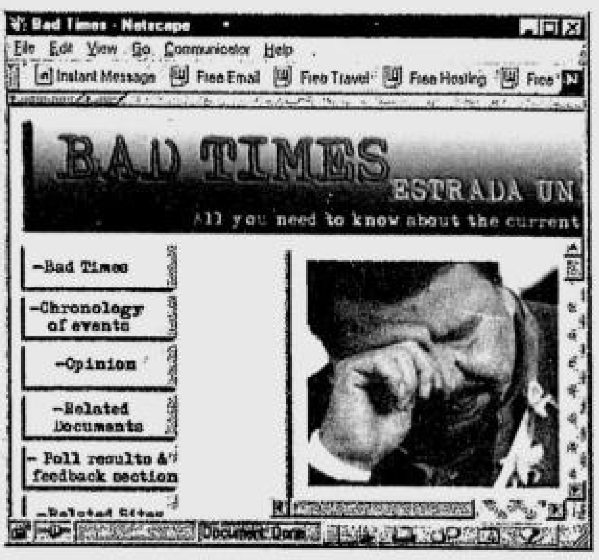
LEO MAGNO, Editor

How IT deleted Erap

IT'S all over.

Fifteen years after the Edsa People Power Revolution deleted a corrupt president from the country's files, the will of the people reigned supreme anew during People Power II. Citizen Joseph Estrada is now a mere corrupt file still stubbornly clinging on to the seat of power like a virus which has no antidote. For truly, there is no cure for those who don't want to be healed.

Estrada has logged off, and the Philippine IT industry contributed to this process. This week's issue of Infotech takes a look at how his ouster was programmed by the country's high technology industry.



BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

WOULD People Power II have been the same without text messaging, e-mail, the Internet and of course, the Metro Rail Transit?

For the people behind the toppling of another corrupt president, the answer is obvious.

Ramon Garcia Jr., president and CEO of DFNN.com, could not help but notice how text messaging, e-mail, and the Internet helped organize the Edsa prayer vigil on Tuesday night after 11 out of 10 senators voted against the opening of the second envelope with perhaps the most damning evidence linking Joseph Estrada to ill-gotten wealth.

"Can you imagine how efficient and quickly technology has allowed Filipinos to spread the news (and rumors), create lightning fast rallies with coordination, and have real-time opinion polls?" says Garcia. "People in the province don't have to wait by their radios, but can actually go to any Internet café and go to www.inquirer.net (soon to be INQ7.net) to get the latest news about (the People Power II)."

The People Power II revolt shows how the Internet becomes a vehicle for delivering news (and we mean fresh) to Filipinos living abroad. Our experience with our "Running Account" of the Estrada impeachment trial and the "What's happening?" website for the People Power II showed us that minutes of downtime or broken links generated e-mail asking what went wrong. Some even go to the extent of calling us up just to inform us that the website is down.

"Revolutions will never quite be the same," Garcia says, wishing that the Edsa People Power in 1986 might have been different with information technology around.

"How would the dictator have tried to send soldiers to silence a server in Silicon Valley?" he quips.

Add to this the fact that the MRT gave many Filipinos easy access to the Edsa Shrine instead of walking all the way toward Edsa which was closed from north to south. In 1986, transportation technology like this was unheard of.

Potent political tool

The most potent communications tool today is not television or radio.

It is that ubiquitous communications device we call the mobile phone. Anecdotal evidence clearly showed that this device has been used to spread news, rumors, jokes and even death threats.

Just a few minutes after the 11 senators on Tuesday night decided not to open the second envelope, Filipinos began sending messages (through short messaging system) to each other. By 11 p.m. of that same night, people began gathering at the now-revered Edsa Shrine, condemning the 11 senators and Estrada for fooling the Filipino people.

That night, mobile phones kept on beeping as millions of text messages rained down on every mobile phone-wielding Filipino. One of the messages read: "The military needs to see one million critical mass in Edsa tomorrow, Jan. 19 before it makes a decision against Erap." Well, on Friday night, the Edsa Shrine crowd swelled to more than a million.

While everyone danced, shouted and cheered, text messages kept on coming. Perhaps you might have forgotten to charge your cell phone if you missed this message: "Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta to make a public apology tonight over Channel 2; for more details please watch Keep on Dancing."

Ramon Isberto of Smart's public affairs once said that text messaging is not being used to its full potential. With that, he suggested that civil society could use this communication tool to organize and disseminate information.

Web protests and polls

The World Wide Web has been the venue of various types of cyberprotests—not just political. But feelings are best vented out through e-mail, through mailing lists and online polls.

Think about it. Some people are more articulate on e-mail, while some think that online polls is a vote of confidence on whoever leads government.

Meanwhile, ideas for websites aimed at Estrada and other political buttheads were spawned like alien creatures from Starcraft. Current favorites include:

(1) Iskandalo Café: a collection of scandals rocking Estrada. (http://iskandalo.com)

(2) Erapjokes: a site that contains, you know what .(http://www.erapjokes.com/)

(3) Hotmanila: A not-so-serious take on politics created by journalist Alan Robles. (http://www.hotmanila.ph/)

(4) Transparent Accountable Governance, a well researched and credible website for corruption in government. (http://www.tag.org.ph)

(5) Erap's Secret Diary: As what the words indicate, it is a supposed online diary of Erap when he became President until the time he was ousted. (http://erap.blogspot.com/)

(6) People Power II special coverage: It gives a blow-by-blow account of the political crisis from Day 1 of the Edsa Shrine prayer vigil to the subsequent resignation of Estrada. (http://www.inq7.net)

Beyond digital and politics

"Yes, we are now in the digital age, to whatever degree our culture, infrastructure and economy (in that order) allow us to be. But the really surprising changes will be elsewhere, in our lifestyle and how we collectively manage ourselves on this planet," wrote former Wired magazine columnist Nicholas Negroponte.

For a society that is beginning to understand what being digital means, People Power II teaches us a few lessons: information technology is here; and here it will stay. If used well, it can and will topple a corrupt and amoral government.

Second, information technology is freedom. Internet is sovereignty.

As Negroponte stressed in his final column for Wired magazine: "We'll be drawing our lines in cyberspace, not in the sand. Already today, belonging to a digital culture binds people more strongly than the territorial adhesives of geography—if all parties are truly digital. Ask yourself about the basics, about water, air and fire. Remember the game 20 Questions? You begin by giving a hint as to whether you are thinking of an animal, a vegetable, or a mineral. OK. I am thinking of none of them. I am thinking of 10011110001011000l."

So this early, start learning how to breathe, eat, smell, feel, see and dream digital.

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RP technology industry also joined call for Estrada to resign

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

EVEN the leaders of the country's information technology industry joined protest movements leading to Saturday's ouster of Jose Velarde.

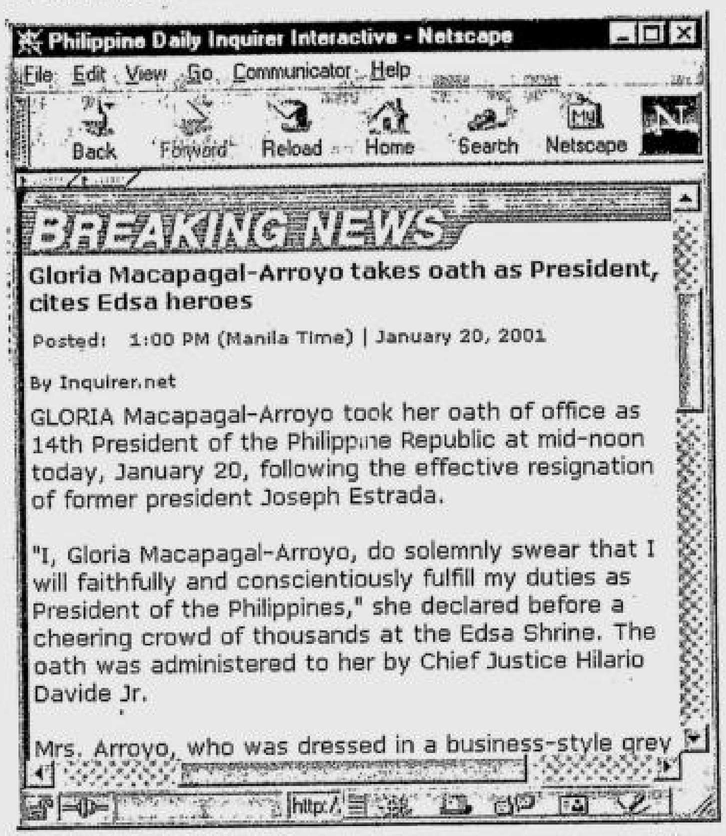
An organization of information technology professionals and an association of computer organizations on Thursday joined other business organizations in denouncing the recent Senate 11-10 vote not to open a sealed envelope containing vital prosecution evidence.

The Makati Business Club and several other trade organizations, the Philippine Computer Society and the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines called for the immediate resignation of Estrada at the height of the People Power II movement.

"I think the feeling among the PCS members is almost unanimous. This can't go on. The President has to provide inspiration to his constituency, which is us," Augusto Lagman, PCS president, told the INQUIRER before Estrada was pushed out during the popular revolt. "We've been working with government through the Information Technology and E-Commerce Council. We've been cooperative but nothing will come out of it until he (the President) steps down," Lagman said.

Lagman got what the industry wanted on Saturday when Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in to take the place of Estrada.

An organization of local Internet service providers on Friday also joined calls for Estrada's resignation. The Philippine Internet Service Organization (Piso) declared that the "political turmoil is affecting every industry including ours." The organization has maintained neutrality with the belief that due process will take its course. Little did Piso know that that process would happen a day after it released its sentiments. Piso decided to call for Estrada's resignation on Jan. 18, after officers and members of its board of trustees decided to "uphold the truth and abide by what is morally right."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BREAKING NEWS

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo takes oath as President, cites Edsa heroes

Posted: 1:00 PM (Manila Time) | January 20, 2001

By Inquirer.net

GLORIA Macapagal-Arroyo took her oath of office as 14th President of the Philippine Republic at mid-noon today, January 20, following the effective resignation of former president Joseph Estrada.

"I, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully and conscientiously fulfill my duties as President of the Philippines," she declared before a cheering crowd of thousands at the Edsa Shrine. The oath was administered to her by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Mrs. Arroyo, who was dressed in a business-style grey

THE INTERNET has given INQ&.net—the joint venture online news delivery company formed with the partnership of INQUIRER and GMA 7—the chance to webcast multimedia news, be it real-time text, audio or video. This proved invaluable during our coverage of the Estrada impeachment trial and People Power II.

The Inquirer, 15 years later

By Leo Magno

IN A four-day period, the Philippines ousted Joseph Estrada. In an eight-hour period, INQ7.net broke the million-page-view barrier.

Now that I've got your attention, let me explain the significance of this figure. The Internet is forcing journalists to evolve since it offers us interactivity and news delivery speed unheard of just a few years ago. A few days ago, this was proven to be true, thanks to citizen Erap.

Tuesday it was when the 11 senator-judges—now senators-in-hiding—voted not to open the second envelope said to contain damning evidence against Erap in his impeachment case. That night on Jan. 16, INQ7.net collected 748,824 page views or 5,131,320 hits. Two days later, as the People Power II movement continued swinging full force, the website received 1,050,873 page views or 6,730,072 hits from midnight of Jan. 18 till 8 a.m. On a 24-hour basis, the site got more than 2 million page views on Jan. 17.

Reason: INQ7.net is the only website in the Philippines which offers near real-time reporting via its "running account.'' We started the Running Account to detail the proceedings of the impeachment trial to the nearest two to five minutes. We set up a news entry form which allows our editors and reporters to input short newsbits—two to three paragraphs each—in a browser-based form. This form also allows them to view the Running Account page with the updated text, then FTP that page if everything is in order. This cuts production time since the editors won't have to pass the text on to the Web encoders, who will then compose the HTML page and then FTP it to our server. Instead, straight from the editor's thought process involved in composing the story, he or she is able to send the file to our server and update our site within minutes from the first letter of the story typed on the keyboard. What appears is a chronology or running account of the impeachment trial a few minutes—sometimes only one minute—apart.

A few days ago we used the same technique with the People Power rally. As events of the rally unfolded, we were able to update our site on the fly. The effect: Increased page views because our readers knew that we'd be giving them more in just a few minutes. And, with an event as big as an impeachment trial or a people's revolt, immediate news delivery such as that offered by INQ7 would surely take you to page viewtopia.

So, how big is a million page views? Let's just say that no other local site can claim such a figure with the data to back it up. Consider too, that INQ7.net was averaging "only'' 500,000 page views in every 24-hour cycle, now we reached a million in only eight hours.

During the impeachment trial and People Power II, Filipinos were deluged by tons of unconfirmed reports (Read: text messages). INQ7.net offered near real-time news with the trademark INQUIRER reliability. Especially for those in the United States, our running account became an invaluable source of news, so much so that we were swamped by legions of e-mail thanking us for the service.

This is not to say, however, that our text-based running account lifted our page views singlehandely. INQ7.net also offered video from GMA 7, another media organization known for reliability. Put the two together and you'd get a tough act to follow. We also had breaking news stories right up the front page, giving users more info and something to return to again and again.

Yet, behind the machine are the people making all of it run like clockwork. INQ7.net's editorial team has evolved into a hard core news delivery machine with almost zero defects. This is how the Internet is transforming the journalist. This is how the Internet is transforming the audience. And, in our own humble way, we hope this was how we were able to help the cause of the Filipino during the impeachment trial and the People Power Revolt.

Fifteen years ago the Filipinos toppled a corrupt president, and the Philippine Daily Inquirer was there to let the people know what was happening. The ouster of Marcos actually paved the way for the INQUIRER to become the No. 1 newspaper in the country that it is today. Fifteen years later, the INQUIRER did it again, this time aided by GMA 7 and the power of real-time worldwide news delivery possible only through the Internet. This is true webcasting in practice and in poetry—a webcast not only of audio, video and text but a webcast of hope and victory spread to all freedom-loving Filipinos worldwide. While the INQUIRER print edition became part of history during People Power I, 15 years later INQ7.net becomes part of history during People Power II. This contribution to society will become the cornerstone on which INQ7.net will now be built.

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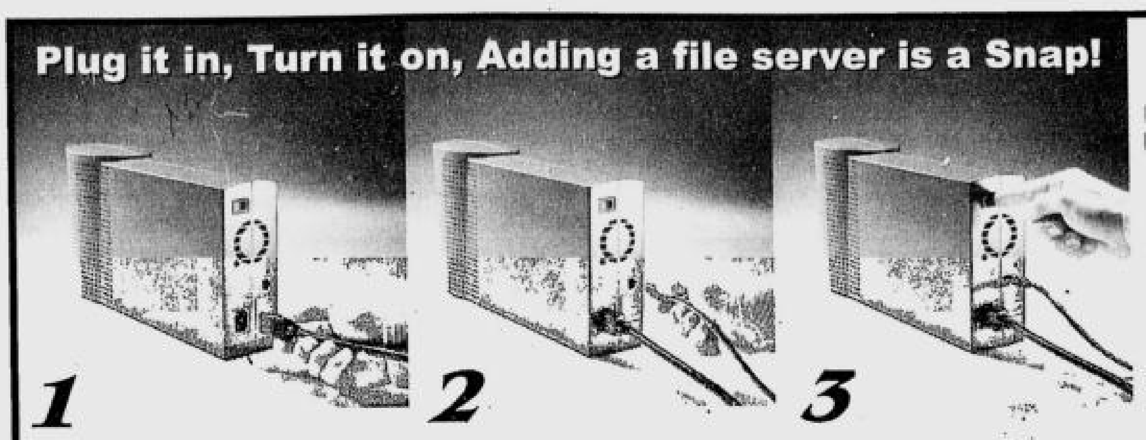

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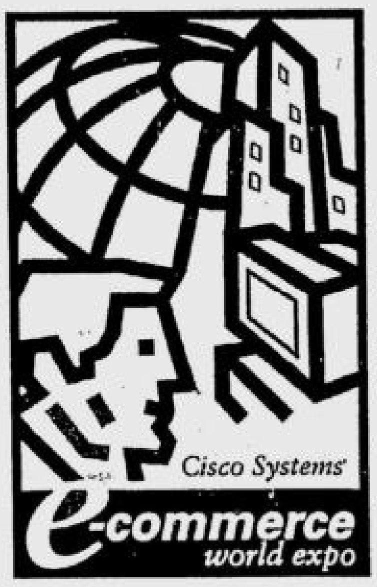

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Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your mercy toward me and being mine.

Thank you Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen.

(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.)

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PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

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(PDI - Jan 21, 22 & 23 2001)

INQUIRER TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Gone crazy

Q. Why is someone behaving wildly said to be running *amok* (or *amuck*)?

A. In the 16th century, Portuguese traders saw some Malays running haphazardly down the streets and attacking people for no apparent reason. Little did the visitors realize that the cause of the murderous frenzy was a nasty strain of opium. The Portuguese took the Malay word amoq ('engaging furiously in battle'), originally used to describe the ferocity of Malay tribesmen, to describe the crazy behaviour of these civilians.

Classified Odd. Late last year in Fort Wayne, Indiana, a barroom fight ended in a dramatic incident when a man bit off another man's ear. Police arrived at the scene and found Steven Sutton still had the victim's ear in his mouth. At the request of the officers to spit it out, Sutton sucked it in and out of his mouth several times, (as if he was playing 'Now you see it, now you don't') and then without hesitation swallowed it. Emmet Wallace, 38, was treated and released. He lost about 40 percent of his ear. The attacker, 32-year-old, Sutton, was charged with two misdemeanors: battery and criminal recklessness. Police tried to find a charged associated with cannibalism, but none exist.

Past Forward. This day in 1949: Chinese leader Mao Tse-tung (now spelled 'Mao Zedong') marched into Peking (now Beijing) at the head of a battle-hardened guerilla army to make the Communists virtual masters of China. The vanquished Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek appealed for immediate peace talks, but Mao contemptuously dismissed the appeal.

WORD WATCH

Apila : from the Spanish *apelar*, 'to appeal.'

(PDI—Jan. 22, 2001)

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Mariano Samson Ronas

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on January 20, 2001 at the age of 73.

His loving wife **Pilar Fernandez-Ronas**; his children **Rolly** and **Racquel**; his son-in-law **Eric Sim**; grandchildren **Patricia** and **Beatrice**; request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

On Wednesday, January 24, 2001 the Holy Mass will be celebrated at the Sacred Heart Parish Church, Kamuning, Quezon City at 9:00 a.m. Interment will take place thereafter at Loyola Memorial Park Marikina, Marikina City.

Atty. Filomeno "Rofi" V. Jacinto

Of 26 Nable St., Dagupan City

Peacefully joined our Creator on January 19, 2001
at the age of 66.

His wife **Lourdes "Lulu" Fernandez-Jacinto**; children **Barbara Beatrix "Babette"** and **Andres Alipio Crescente "Alan"**; brother **Adventor "Ven"** (†), **Rev. Fr. Dimas "Di"**; sister **Marie**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in the state at the Family Chapel, Nable St., Dagupan City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, January 24, 2001, at the Eternal Garden, AB Fernandez East, Dagupan City, after the 10:00 a.m. Holy Mass at Parish Church of Saint John Evangelist, Dagupan City.

OUR DEARLY BELOVED

Atty. Proculo "Boy" P. Fuentes Jr.

Peacefully joined our Creator
on January 20, 2001 at the age of 63.

We, his loving wife **Fe**; and children **Boogie** and **Rosabelle**, **Girlie** and **Al**, **Wilbur** and **Mimat**, **Jinggay** and **William**, and **Jekjek**; grandchildren, brother and sisters, nephews and nieces and all those whose lives he touched request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes at Camus St., Davao City.

Interment will be on January 24, 2001 at the San Pedro Memorial Park after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Assumption Church.

FRANCISCO "KOKO" TRINIDAD

*Peacefully joined his Creator and his beloved first wife **Lina Flor** on Sunday, January 21, 2001 at the age of 85.*

He is survived by his second wife **Caring**. His bereaved children and their spouses **Ferdi** and **Bebet**, **Corky** and **Hana**, **Noel** and **Lally**, **Marilyn** and **Tony Mapa**.

His grandchildren **Alex**, **Sabrina**, and **Nicky**; **Flip**, **Pia**, **Lara**, **Larry**, and **Annie**; **Trixie** and **Pancho**, **Joel**, and **Michael**; **Tonton** and **Mylene**, **Rina** and **Daniel**, **Nikko** and **Roshan**, **Lisa** and **Miel**.

And his great grandchildren **Nicholas**, **Nacho**, **Toby**, **Michael**, **Santino**, **Maegan (†)**, and **Javi** rejoice in his return to his heavenly Father.

His remains lie in state at Christ the King Church, Green Meadows Avenue, Pasig City and will be cremated after the 9:00 a.m. Funeral Mass on Wednesday, January 24, 2001.

Daily Mass will be celebrated at 8:00 p.m. from January 21 to January 24, 2001.

ADORACION D. QUIMORA

of Poblacion, Mandaluyong City

Passed away peacefully in the Grace of our Lord and joined her husband Manuel (†) on January 21, 2001.

Her bereaved family: sons **Arnold** and **Dennis**; daughters-in-law **Ma. Leonora** and **Ma. Theresa**; grandchildren **Dorothy Leonor**, **Frances Anne**, and **Lawrence Gabriel**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.
Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels,
G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.
Interment will be announced later.

"From darkness let the light shine!"
Genesis 1:3

"I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me, will live, even though he dies,
and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11: 25-26

In Loving Memories

LUCIA "Nanay Lucing" INTON Vda. De VIACRUSIS

December 13, 1924 - January 22, 1999

On her Second Death Anniversary

Her children **Cesar** and **Belen**, **Ding** and **Miriam**, **Bot** and **Nessy**, **Beng**, **Jess** and **Rosie**, **Chie**, **Boy** and **Erma**, **Viring** and **Ave**, **Bong** and **Lea**; and her grandchildren **Vic**, **Jun**, **Albert**, **Jean**, **Rachelle**, **Mydee**, **Paul**, **Randy**, **Eric**, **Hernan**, **Tek**, **Lorie**, **Jay R**, **Mutya**, **Anne**, **Leo**, **Francis**, **Andy**, **Beth**, **Lucia Rin**, **Christian**, **Matty**, **AJ** and **Janet** and other relatives and friends to remember her in their prayers.

The Holy Mass will be offered at the following churches on January 22, 2001.

Columban Church Olongapo City	6:00 AM
Holy Family Church Kalaklan, Olongapo City	7:00 AM
Carmelite Monastery Ilwas Subic, Zambales	7:30 AM
Olongapo Memorial Park Olongapo City	10:30 AM
St. Joseph Church Olongapo City	5:00 PM

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord"
2 Corinthians 5:8

"I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are Yours.

1John 17:9

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ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
42 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City
Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031; 715-1027
CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City Tel. 732-0309; 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu
Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City Tels. 231-0721, 231-3192

COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City
Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City Tel. 894-5932 to 34
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St., Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 713-6102; 741-5125; 741-5133 • Fax No. 711-3084
FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila
Tels. 2812063, 2813034, 2810522
FUNERARIA PANGILINAN
Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City
(045) 322-5247, (045) 888-2959

GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila Tels. 642-6181 to 82
HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Sucat, Parañaque City Tels. 825-1296, 825-1201
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#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Tel. 722-2730; Cell (0917) 5680136 ; (0917) 5680145
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Tels. 749-3806 to 11
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79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City Tel. (074) 443-3337

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SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City
Telefax 724-4139, 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City Tels. 852-8228; 852-7284
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila
Tels. 749-3679, 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City
Tels. 372-5084; 410-9286 / 87
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue, 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City
Tels. 831-3797; 844-7846; 843-1801; 845-4836

‘Chicken Soup for the Soul’ author in Manila

INSPIRATIONAL author Mark Victor Hansen will present a seminar titled "How to Think Bigger...

Bigger Than You Ever Thought You Could" on March 15, 2001 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

Hansen is the renowned co-author of the "Chicken Soup of the Soul'' series, a powerful line-up of 30 books and more than 100 audio, video and CD-ROM titles distributed worldwide in multiple languages. Some of his bestsellers include "The Aladdin Factor,'' "Dare to Win,'' "Visualizing is Realizing,'' "Mastering the Mastermind Principles,'' "Living Your Dreams,'' "The Miracle of Tithing,'' "Future Diary,'' "Mind Power Anthology'' and most recently, "The Power of Focus.''

"During this time of political uncertainty and economic slowdown, a big dose of motivation and inspiration is what we Filipinos need," says Monette Hamlin, president of event organizer TeamAsia. "Master

motivator Mark Victor Hansen's innovative ideas, timeless principles, and easy-to-use techniques delivered in an electrifying and charismatic presentation can give us the shot in the arm we need to triumph during

these hard times and take charge of our future and those of our children."

Using the secrets and techniques that Mark will share with the participants, Hamlin says participants will learn how to conquer setbacks to seize success, harness their brainpower, feel better about themselves and their abilities, and take charge of their financial futures. "Participants will also discover the power of producing substantial positive changes in their lives, including increasing their personal effectiveness, energy and mental clarity; identifying actions that will result in attaining their life dreams and desires, and using their fears as rocket fuel to launch their success," she explained.

For details, contact Cerise Manuel of Team Asia at 546-0908, 807-6370 or 842-3289 or e-mail cvmanuel@teamasia.com.ph.

‘Coincidence or Miracle II’ now off the press

THE SEQUEL to the best-selling inspirational book "Coincidence or Miracle'' published last year is now off the press.

Authors Flor Tarriela, undersecretary of finance and Butch Jimenez of GMA Network and GMA Films have launched "Coincidence or Miracle II'' because they felt the need to bring hope to people at these times of political and economic crisis, despair and moral decline.

"Coincidence or Miracle II'' is a compilation of 101 inspirational and true stories of real people from all walks of life, among them former President Cory Aquino, former Senate president Jovito Salonga and secretary of finance Jose T. Pardo. There are also stories from housewives, students, businessmen, government officials, financial executives, retirees, professionals and artists. Each story carries a special message that God is alive and in control.

For how can you explain former Senate president Jovy Salonga surviving the Plaza Miranda bombing in 1971 which left him without a pulse or Finance secretary Jose T. Pardo being miraculously healed of his heart ailment. Then there's the story of Eric Alberto, who was supposed to leave the country but because of an airport strike his flight was cancelled, which was a "good'' thing because he had to be rushed to the hospital that very hour due to an acute appendicitis. Agnes Mondonedo and Mel Salazar getting their best jobs ever after they were retrenched.

These are not coincidences. Someone up there is orchestrating the scenario, strategizing, putting the pieces together. This is the central theme of "Coincidence or Miracle II.''

"Coincidence or Miracle II'' has a bonus story by Gloria V. de Guzman, a Carlos Palanca awardee who translated the book in Pilipino, "Pagkakataon o Himala.'' Her blood pressure became stable while she was translating the book. The special touch she received changed her health and spiritual outlook that she has offered to translate upcoming sequels of "Coincidence or Miracle'' for free.

"Coincidence or Miracle II'' and "Pagkakataon o Himala'' are published by Conquest for Christ Foundation and are now available at National Bookstore, Pilipino Book Store, Bookmark, OMF and other leading bookstores.

Mini Job Fair AT THE Glorietta

The **INQUIRER**’s **JOB MARKET** will hold a **“mini” Job Fair** on **January 24 to 26, 2001**; 1 to 8 p.m. at Level 3, Glorietta III, Ayala Center, Makati City (near Racks). Be part of this recruitment special and be included in our **Resumé Reserve** categorized database.

FILL-OUT OUR RESUMÉ RESERVE FORM VIA COMPUTER OR BRING YOUR RESUMÉS INTENDED FOR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES:

- ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.
- Accent-Micro Technologies, Inc.
- ACMI Office Systems
- AD Drugsteel Laboratories
- Advance Fasteners Inc.
- Akasia Services Corporation
- Aruanda Development
- Asian College of Science
- Atom Chemical Co., Inc.
- Attila Incorporated
- Axcess Technologies
- Ayala Systems Tech., Inc.
- Business Machines Corp.
- Body and Soul
- Brochiere Online
- Business Trends
- C.J. Fernandez Ent. Inc.
- Catalina Security Agency
- Celebrity Sports
- Century Park Hotel
- Clean-Flo Phils., Inc.
- Comfac
- Community Craft
- Corporate Executive Search
- Creative Nations Inc.
- Danfoss Incorporated
- Datasearch
- Delifrance Phils.
- DKT International
- Eastman Industrial Supply
- El Archivo
- Equitable Computer Services
- Ericsson
- Executive Optical
- Expressions
- Family First, Inc.
- Filipinas Thermo King
- Filipino Travel Center
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- G. Cosmos Phils. Inc.
- Genetic Computer Institute
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- Gomeco Metal Corp.
- GX International Inc.
- Habitat for Humanity
- Han Seo Pharma
- Hantec International
- Hawker Pacific
- Indio Communications
- Information Products Corporation
- Information Professionals
- Infovision
- Joaquin Cunanan & Co.
- Jo-Nas International
- K2 Interactive Inc.
- L.G. Atkimson
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- Marie France
- Marilag Business & Industry
- Maxicare PCIB Cigna Health
- Medicard Phils.
- Medtronix Medical Supplies & Equipment
- Megaworld Properties
- Mercelles Jewelry
- Mydatrade Ventures
- Network Solutions Interfaces Corp.
- NIIT
- Nissan North Edsa
- Nova Star Int'l. Inc.
- Novartis Agro Phils., Inc.
- Olga Palado
- One Hundred Services
- PAAENCOR
- Peak Properties Inc.
- Peoples Support:
- Philippine Home Cable
- Platinum Plans
- PRA Solutions
- Radio Veritas Asia
- Rakso Air Travel & Tours, Inc.
- Ramcar Group of Companies
- Rustan's Supermarket
- Shoemart Incorporated
- Southville School
- Sports House Int'l. Leisure
- State Investment Trust
- Sykes Asia, Inc.
- Sysu International
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- The Leather Collection
- The World Bank
- Tokyo Tokyo
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PAYMENT CENTERS

Citibank Visa/MasterCard cardholders may now go to any of SBC's branch around the country to make their card payments over the counter. Shown at the contract signing are Citibank officials (from left) Ian Fenton, GCB chief financial officer; Leo Gavelas, VP for operations and technology services; Nina Aguas, country business manager; and SBC officials Rafael F. Simpao Jr., president; Ma. Rodora Bañares, SVP for retail banking group; and Jojie G. Manalaysay, VP for marketing.

United Way Philippines Inc.
MEDICAL OUT

MEDICAL MISSION

The medical team of United Way Philippines Inc. recently visited Ligas, Cavite to give free medical services to its residents. During the mission, Ponstan 250, the mefenamic acid brand clinically proven to work in as fast as 15 minutes, were given to those in need of an effective pain reliever. Shoen are UWPI president Dr. Erlinda L. Luna (fifth from left) with Cavite 1st District board member Strike Revilla (sixth from left) and members of UWPI medical team.

TURNOVER CEREMONY

Crown Asia-South recently turned over two houses to Habitat for Humanity Las Piñas to mark its fifth year in the real estate and property business. Silvino Obang, 38 (carrying a child) and Alberto Yumul (not in photo) are the recipients of the houses. Witness the turnover are Villar Foundation president Cynthia Villar, Las Piñas councilors Ching Fabian and Ruben Ramos, Crown Asia-South chief operating officer Rosario Javier, and C&P Homes president Marcelino Mendoza.

HBC OPENS 70TH STORE

HBC "Your Personal Store," a member of the Splash Group of Companies, brings its exclusive line of cosmetics and beauty products to the southern part of Manila with the opening of its newest branch in Ilaya, Tondo. Guest of honor in the inauguration is Tondo councilor Ishko Moreno. Welcoming him are HBC purchasing manager Glenn Bolado (second from left) and HBC Ilaya branch head Carmelita Bernardino (fourth from left).

BEAT THAT BODY

Students from AMA Computer College in Project 8, QC, cheered and voted for the guy with the sexiest body during dwLL/ Mellow Touch 94.7's On Campus Tour. AMA College is the fourth campus to be visited by dwLL, the first three including UP Diliman, Ateneo and DLSU-College of Saint Benilde.

MEDICAL MISSION FOR MARINES

The Public Affairs Group (AFPRESCOM) conducted a civic action medical/dental, optometric, deworming and milk feeding operation as well as distribution of nutritional products and toys for dependents of the Philippine Marine Corps at the Fort Bonifacio Naval Station. Shown in action is the optometric team composed of M/Sgt. Nazareno, T/Sgt. Estelita Cervania, 1st Lt. Felipa Destajo, and M/Sgt. Lydia Salayo of PAG.

"I am a Christian Achiever."

DLSU reaffirms Mission Statement

In the midst of a national crisis, De La Salle University (DLSU) reaffirms its Mission Statement in light of its role in the national struggle against injustice and corruption, towards recovery and peace.

DLSU will observe its Mission Statement-University Week starting January 22, with the theme "I am a Christian Achiever." The weeklong commemoration reinforces the call for every Lasallian to seek ways to become vital resources for Church and nation. It will kick off with a multi-sectoral mass, an offering to God of the community's prayer for the nation.

Calling for good governance, the College of Liberal Arts will hold a series of activities dubbed "Alisin". The event, scheduled daily during noon breaks, will feature discussions, forums, performances, and a display of protest art. Set at an open area, the activity aims to allow maximum participation for the greater conscientization of the community. These events are complemented with the Lasallians' daily troop to the EDSA Shrine.

Late last week, following a fateful decision by 11 senator-judges to set aside a second documented evidence against Estrada, DLSU-Manila joined the nation in mourning the death of justice. In a statement, it rejected the continuation of the impeachment trial and again called on the President and all his cabinet members to resign. The statement, signed by DLSU-Manila administrators led by DLSU System President Brother Rolando Dizon, FSC, noted that "nothing President Estrada can do can can restore the loss of confidence in his leadership and his government."

The University Week, just like in previous years', will also highlight the contributions of the Lasallian community to the country. In an exhibit, the College of Engineering will showcase a prototype of the micro-hydro power plant which it designed for Abra to generate electricity for the town of Malibcong. A faculty member will also disseminate findings of a study on ways to combat child labor in the tourism industry. The Student Council will also be in the forefront in a medical mission for St. Anthony Parish in Singalong. Another batch of students will render teaching services to senior high school students of Pasay City West High School for bookkeeping. The campus will also be open to hearing impaired students for an on the spot painting contest offered by the Specialized Education Department.

During the week, the University will also be a showcase of scholarly work with lectures covering different topics such as micro-robots, Internet, Catholicism and spirituality, computer systems and programs, and public health delivery. The feast day of St. John Baptist de La Salle, founder of the vocation for Christian Brothers, falls on the week of the celebration. In line with that, the University will host a feast day gathering at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium which will feature a Mass and a Lasallian show.

Renewing the Lasallian Mission

The La Salle community celebrates once again the feast day of St. John Baptist de La Salle. This year, we mark the 90th year of the Lasallian education in Philippines.

On this special occasion, we celebrate our achievements and we renew our commitment to working together in the development of education in the country. As one Lasallian family, we continue to pursue our commitment to our mission of serving God and country.

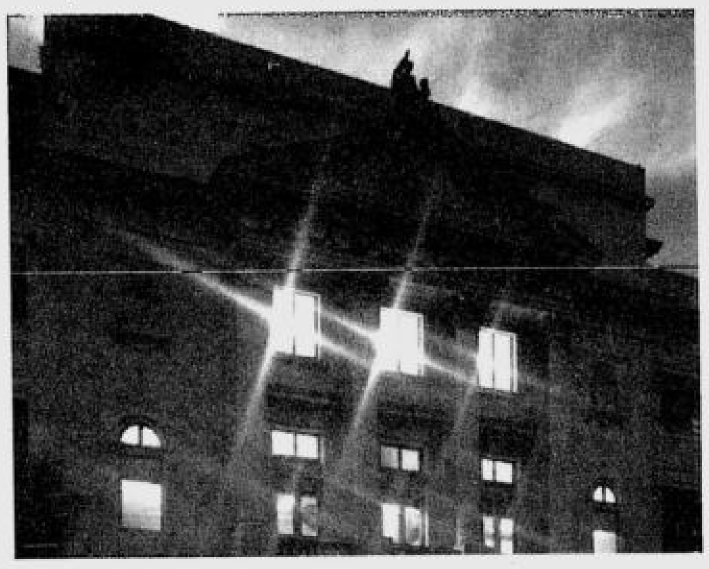
We are also reminded to carry on the traditions of service and excellence espoused by our founder, St. La Salle. Every Lasallian is enjoined to strive for meaningful success, to work not only for individual advancement but more importantly, for betterment of society.

"I am a Christian Achiever"

I am a student, a teacher, an administrator, a co-academic personnel, an alumnus. I manage my own business. I am a religious. I am in the arts. I work in government. I excel in sports. I lead a corporation. I am a homemaker. I have a career in media. I work for an NGO.

Whatever I do,I do with excellence. Wherever I am I find opportunities to serve God and my country.

I am a Christian Achiever.



UNIVERSITY WEEK ACTIVITIES

January 22-27, 2001

Exhibits.

Toxic Inheritance. 7:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m. DLSU Library. Sponsored by Communication Department.

CHIAROSCURO: 40 Years of LaSallian History in Black and White. 7:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m. DLSU Art Gallery. Sponsored by The LaSallian

The Abra Micro-Hydro Project. 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. St. Joseph Bldg. Lobby. Sponsored by COE-SERVECOM.

Faculty and Student Projects of the College of Engineering. 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Conservatory Lobby. Sponsored by College of Engineering (COE).

Exhibit/Seminar.

Mbassy Camp. 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Sports Plaza. Sponsored by Council of Student Organizations (CSO).

Sports.

Inter-college Sportsfest. 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Football Field. Sponsored by Engineering College Assembly.

January 22 (Monday)

Open House.
Teaching and Research Laboratory Exhibits. 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.STRC &-Engineering Laboratories. Sponsored by COE.

Mass.

University Mass. 12 nn-1:00 p.m.Chapel of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Sponsored by Lasallian Pastoral Office (LSPO).

Awareness Building.

ALISIN! 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.Amphitheater. Sponsored by Political Science Department.

Lecture.

Towards a 'New Paradigm' of the Case of the People of God: Universal and Universalizable by Fr. Celestino Gianan. 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. Tereso Lara Seminar Room. Sponsored by Philosophy Department.

Demonstration.

Soccer Robot. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. North Wing Conservatory. Sponsored by Manufacturing Engineering and Management Department.

Certificate Signing.

Adopt-an-Engineering School Commitment. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. COE Conference Room.Sponsored by COE-SERVECOM.

Seminar.

Power Dressing. 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.Pablo Nicolas Auditorium. Sponsored by B&E Assembly.

Fellowship Lecture.

Beware of Meat!: Philippine Cases of Bubaline, Bovine and Swine Sarcosystis Spp. Infection by Dr. Florencia Claveria, University Fellow. 2:30 p.m.-4:15 p.m. Ariston Estrada.Sponsored by Society of Fellows.

Talk.

Archer Achiever (College of Business and Economics.) 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Waldo Perfecto.Sponsored by SC and the Marketing Communication Office (MCO).

January 23 (Tuesday)

Alternative Classes.

Lasallian Enrichment Alternative Program. 9:00 a.m.-12:00 nn.Various venues.Sponsored by SC.

Awareness Building.

ALISIN! 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.Amphitheater. Sponsored by Behavioral Sciences Department.

Professorial Lectures.

Isotopic *Tracer Study and Temperature Programmed Desorption Technique in Catalysis by Dr. Susan Gallardo, holder of the Judge Guillermo Guevarra Professorial Chair in Chemical Engineering.* 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. STRC 412. Sponsored by Chemical Engineering Department.

Developing a Java-based B2C E-Commerce System by Dr. Remedios Bulos, holder of the Chair of Computer Science. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.Intellect Seminar Room. Sponsored by College of Computer Studies Research Office.

E-Kritika:Panimulang Pagdulog sa Katuturan ng Literaturang Visual by Dr. Isagani Cruz, holder of the Alfredo E. Litiatco Professorial Chair in Literature. 2:40 p.m.-4:10 p.m. EmilioYap Case Room. Sponsored by Departamento ng Literatura at Wikang Filipino (DLWF).

Alternative Classes.

Lasallian Enrichment Alternative Program. 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.Various.venues.Sponsored by SC.

January 24 (Wednesday)

Inauguration.

Blessing of the CHED-Zonal Research Center. 10:15 a.m.-10:30 a.m.CHED-ZRC(LS-154 & 155).Sponsored by University Research Center Office (URCO).

Talk.

Archer Achiever (College of Engineering). 10:00 a.m.-12:00nn. Waldo Perfecto Seminar Room. Sponsored by SC and MCO.

Symposium.

Pressing Concerns and Current Trends in a University Counseling Center: A Research Dissemination Symposium. 10:00 a.m.-12:00 nn. Tereso Lara Seminar Room. Sponsored by University Guidance and Counseling Center (UGCC).

Lecture.

Hermeneutics of Appreciation: A Cultural-Theological Approach for Inculturating the Faith by Dr. Jose de Mesa. 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m. Emilio Yap Case Room. Sponsored by Religious Education Department.

Awareness Building.

ALISIN! 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.Amphitheater. Sponsored by Communication Department.

Professorial Chair Lectures.

Micro-Robots for Soccer Game by Dr. Elmer Dadios, holder of the Thomas J. Lee Professorial Chair in Manufacturing Engineering and Management. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Tereso Lara Seminar Room. Sponsored by MEM.

On Hadamart Groups by Dr. Blessilda Raposa, holder of the Chair in Mathematics. 1:00 p.m-2:30 p.m. SJ 504.Sponsored by College of Science (COS).

Forum.

Huntahan ng mga Manunulat: Paano Nagsusulat? 12:50 p.m.-2:20 p.m. Ariston Estrada. Sponsored by Bienvenido Santos Creative Writing Research Center (CWRC).

Lectures.

Greating a Powerful Learning Environment by Dr. Allan Benedict Bernardo. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Ortigas Seminar Room.Sponsored by Institute for Faculty Development.

Porn in the Internet: Boon or Bane? By Gil Fontanilla. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.Intellect Seminar Room. Sponsored by College of Computer Studies Pagkamulat (CCS Pagkamulat).

Was Catholicism Created by Satan to Pervert Humanity?—A Spiritual Journey of Love and Reconciliation by Shane Robertson. 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Tereso Lara Seminar Room. Sponsored by Philosophy Department.

Talk.

Archer Achiever (College of Computer Studies). 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Intellect Seminar Room. Sponsored by SC and MCO.

January 25 (Thursday)

Professorial Chair Lecture.

Shifts, Twists and the Way Forward: Institutional Dimensions of Quality Health Service Provision by Dr. Exaltacion Lamberte, holder of the Chair in Applied Social Science. 9:40 a.m.-12:00 nn. Ariston Estrada Seminar Room. Sponsored by Behavioral Sciences Department.

Multimedia Presentation.

Krishna Consciousness. 9:40 a.m.-11:10 a.m.William Shaw Little Theater. Religious Studies Department.

Talk.

Archer Achiever (College of Liberal Arts). 10:00 a.m.-12:00 nn. Waldo Perfecto Seminar Room. Sponsored by SC and MCO.

Awareness Building.

ALISIN! 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.Amphitheater. Sponsored by History Department.

Lecture.

In Search of the Holy by Raymundo Lualhati. 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.Tereso Lara Seminar Room. Sponsored by Philosophy Department.

Towards a Multi-lingual Machine Translation System Involving Philippine Dialects by Dr. Rachel Roxas. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Intellect Seminar Room. Sponsored by College of Computer Studies Research Office.

Professorial Chair Lecture.

Combating Child Labor in the Tourism Industry by Dr. Divina Edralin, holder of the Don Rufino Deeunhong. Professorial Chair in Business Administration. 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.Pablo Nicolas Auditorium. Sponsored by Business Management Department.

Talk.

Archer Achiever (College of Science). 3:00pm-5:00pm. Waldo Perfecto Seminar Room. Sponsored by SC and MCO.

Program.

Bato Awards. 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. North Wing Conservatory. Sponsored by CLA.

January 26 (Friday)

Talk.

Archer Achiever (College of Education). 10:00 a.m.-12:00 nn. Waldo Perfecto Seminar Room. Sponsored by SC and MCO.

Lecture.

The Relevance of Saint John Baptist de la Salle to Our Time by Jose Victor Jimenez. 11:40 a.m.-12:40 p.m.Tereso Lara Seminar Room. Sponsored by History Department.

Awareness Building.

ALISIN! 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.Amphitheater. Sponsored by International Studies Department.

Book Launching.

Filipino Philosophy:Traditional Approach and Filipino Philosophy: A Critical Bibliography (1774-1997)(CD ROM) by Dr. Rolando Gripaldo. 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.Tereso Lara Seminar Room. Sponsored by Philosophy Department.

Professorial Chair Lecture.

Updates on TTF Chemistry by Dr. Gerardo Janairo, holder of the Antonio Palanca Professorial Chair in Chemistry. 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. SJ 504. Sponsored by College of Science (COS).

Contest.

On-the-Spot Painting contest for Hearing Impaired Students. 8:00a.m.-10:00a.m. Willian Hall Gazebo. Sponsored by Specialized Education Department.

Lasallian Celebration.

One Spirit, One Mission. 12:00 nn-4:00 p.m. Ninoy Aquino Stadium. Sponsored by Lasallian Celebration 2001 Committee.

Concert.

Mbassy Live: Animo Celebration featuring Freestyle. 6:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Ampitheather.Sponsored by SC-OVP Activities and all college assemblies.

January 27 (Saturday)

Social Action.

Medical Mission. 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. St.Anthony Parish Church. Sponsored by B&E Assembly & College Assembly of Education

Social Action/Lecture.

Basic Bookkeeping for Fourth Year Public High School Students. 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Pasay City West HS. Sponsored by Accountancy Department.

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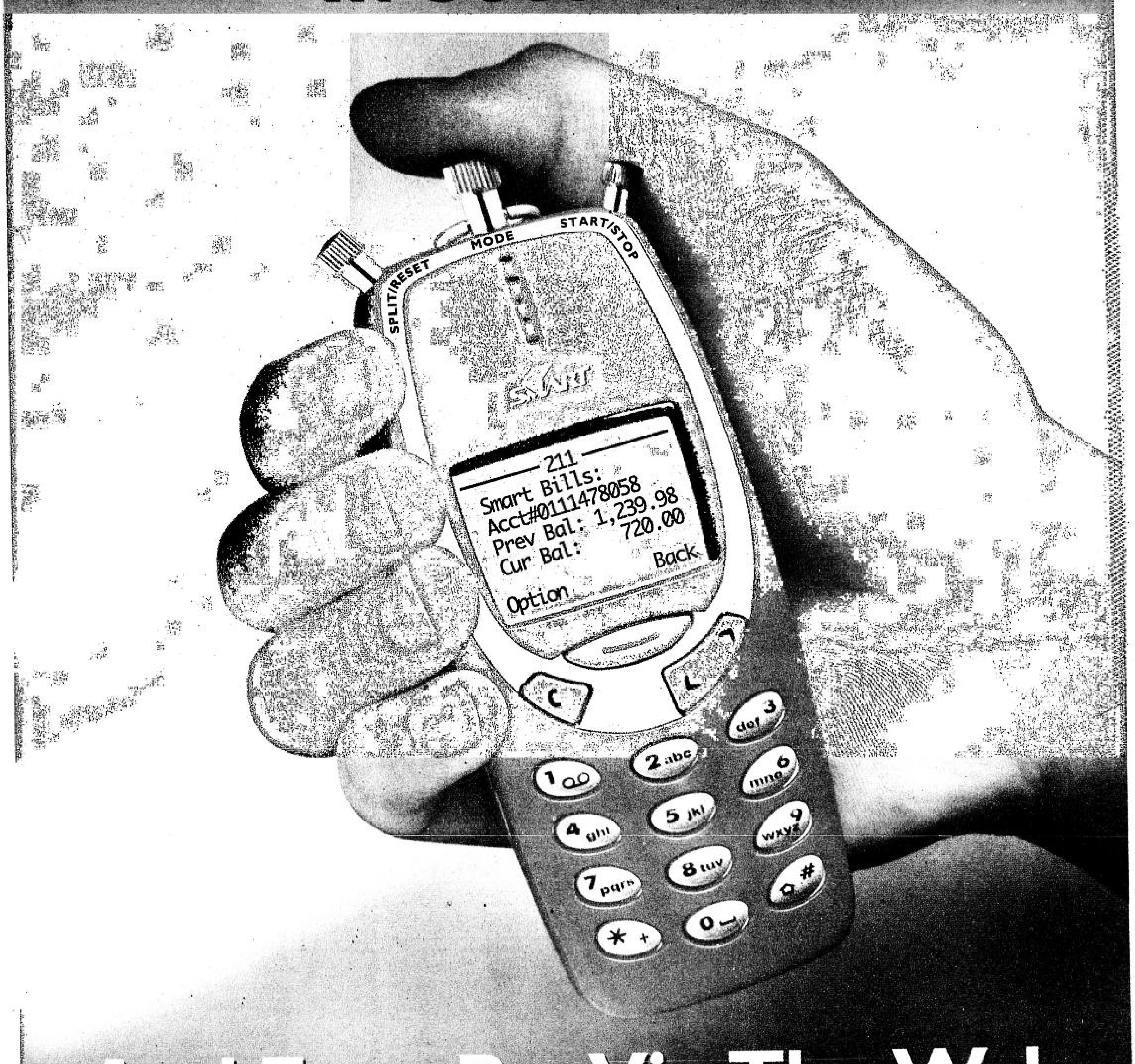

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BUSINESS*Monday*

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

GRAND VITARA
SUZUKI

What happens to the economy when Erap leaves?

BY MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO

LAST Wednesday, former Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority chair Richard Gordon, reminded the thousands gathered at Edsa that the country's economic problems will not go away when President Estrada leaves.

And he is right. New jobs are not likely to sprout the minute Estrada leaves. Investors are not expected to come in droves upon the President's departure. Exports will not shoot up when a successor swears in.

But the resignation of the President will at the least bring a psychological boost to the economy that can pave the way for positive business developments.

This is clearly seen in the appreciation of the peso to P47.50:$1 last Friday from last Thursday's historical high of P54.79:$1 after the march of military's top brass to the rallying people in Edsa to announce the withdrawal of their support to the President.

It will be recalled that after the People Power Revolution in 1986, the economy posted its highest economic gains in three years at the end of that year.

Budget deficit

But the biggest problem of the country—the huge budget deficit amounting to P130 billion at the end of 2000 is definitely not one that will go away when Estrada leaves.

The amount is the biggest the national government has ever incurred. A deficit comes about when the government is not able to collect enough revenues for its expenditures. Collections principally come from taxes and sale of government assets plus other fees collected.

The slowdown in the economy last year, which lowered tax collection, and the unexpected expenses incurred like financing the war against the Abu Sayyaf during the first half of last year aggravated the situation.

Of course the rampant smuggling, particularly by Estrada's cronies, has deprived the government of millions if not billions in taxes and duties.

Among the first issues Estrada's successor will have to address is the huge deficit.

EVEN when he goes, economic problems will not go away.

London-based credit rating agency Firch stated recently that "IMF budget targets have been consistently missed by a wide margin: tax revenues remain weak, despite stronger economy growth in 1999-2000 and the primary surplus has all but disappeared."

Foreign investments

Foreign investments may not immediately come in but a few investors have declared that they will look at the Philippines again once the political situation stabilizes.

Carrefour, the second-largest retailer in the world, scrapped earlier plans of investing P4 billion into the Rustan Supercenters Inc. in view of the economic and political problems.

Another French retailer, Casino, shelved its plans to invest in Uniwide Sales, which was experiencing financial difficulties.

A foreign firm that was set to tie up with the Aboitiz group for a huge project asked that they wait for Estrada's resignation before resuming negotiations.

Dollar remittances from Filipinos overseas also slowed down because of stiffer competition among other nationalities in the countries where they are working and the higher value of the dollar versus the peso which made them send lower amounts.

Exports

Because of the higher exchange rate, exports slowed down as most exporters use dollar-based imported raw materials.

An exporter complained that they only got orders for about $30,000 instead of the usual $300,000 during a recent trade fair because very few foreign buyers came as a result of the bombings and the prevailing political uncertainty.

Exporters had to go abroad to look for buyers and this entails higher costs.

Graft and corruption

The huge amounts lost from graft and corruption can never be quantified. More often than not, the amounts that go to the pockets of corrupt politicians are higher than the funds that go to the project.

This results in bad infrastructure and facilities that do not work.

The road to recovery is not going to be smooth and easy but the experience with the Estrada administration is expected to make the people more vigilant and perhaps make the country's leaders less likely to engage themselves in anomalous acts.

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Politicians impoverishing the people

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Augusto L. de Leon

THE IMPEACHMENT proceedings made available to the public some information that was previously just surmised and considered loose talk. The massive posters all around the country on the government's "Sugpuin ang Corruption" drive failed to cover the extent of corruption that really took place to explain why the many government programs designed to uplift the poor were not effective—our people remained poor.

Take the case of the figures that were aired during the impeachment proceedings. Some P200 million were released by the government to purchase tobacco dryers for the Ilocano farmers. In this case, the projected expenditures could have truly helped the farmers.

I have first-hand exposure in the Ilocos area. While the Ilocano farmers are hardworking, the soil, climatic condition, and capabilities of the farmers make tobacco the preferred crop among them.

Ground water is fast depleting. There is even danger that salt water from the long China Sea coastline of the Ilocos provinces will seep in the fresh underground water as more and more deep well irrigation wells come up.

It is unfortunate that the denudation of the forests has altered the flow of water to the sea. When there were upland forests, much of the rainwater seeped underground and gradually moved year round. With deforestation, rainwater flows above ground, erodes topsoil and even causes floods in the lowland areas.

There have been some three major reforestation projects undertaken in the watershed during the last three or four decades. To date, the mountains are still denuded and during rainy season, one can see the rich soil flowing as mud draining toward the sea.

Soil pollution drives the fish away from the seashores and kills coral, reducing the reproduction of fish and making the livelihood of the coastal fisherfolk less and less productive.

Farmers admitted that they are partly responsible for the failure of reforestation because when the trees grow to even about an inch or two in diameter, they cut the trees to use as firewood or convert to charcoal. Having firewood and charcoal is considered a necessity to keep body and soul together. They have to dry their tobacco harvest.

The mechanical dryers can, therefore, really solve their problems. But if only 20 percent goes to the dryer and the remaining P160 million leak out to the politicians, it will take many more years before the poor farmers gain relief from their poverty.

When we learn of the huge amount of money allocated to help the tobacco farmers over the past years, one can only wonder why the tobacco farmers and the many other farmers, with inadequate water to sustain other agricultural production, remain poor.

Based on previous exposés, it appears that whenever Malacañang gets involved in a project, public funds, whether from taxation or from borrowings, get divided as follows. About 40 percent to the politicians and 20 percent each to the bureaucracy, businessmen/contractor and to the project itself.

With only 20 percent going to serve the public interest, the returns on investment in terms of increasing the economic productivity will be very small, if not negative. It becomes negative if the project is designed only as an excuse to derive benefit from the expenditure, or if what goes to the project remains inoperative due to the insufficiency of the 20 percent that is left after the corruption.

The government expenditure originally designed for the poor starts a cycle that only aggravates poverty because government borrows to finance its expenditure. Now, borrowings stand at a monstrous P3 trillion.

Without an increase in productive economic activities resulting from the expenditure, we constantly suffer from inflation. We live with this every year. The peso depreciates against other foreign currencies. The cost of living goes up making the poor pay for most of the cost because almost all their income are used to pay for the essentials to keep on living—food, medicine, education, utilities, etc.

To window dress the impact of inflation, government tries to keep their inflation statistics down. Rice represents accounts for more than half of the inflation index, so the trick is for government to manipulate the pricing of rice by forcing the prices to go down.

When the government sets the price targets of rice, the prices of *palay* from the rice farmers adjust accordingly. A study now in the hands of ADB demonstrates that the price of *palay* is one half the price of rice.

Since all other costs of production to the farmers go up and the cost of living of the farmers goes up with inflation, they end up bankrupt in their farming business. Production goes down and government starts with production programs to get the farmers started again, only to repeat the cycle of policy actions that lead to their bankruptcy.

Over the long term, government borrowings will eventually have to be paid by the future generation. We are spending now what the future generation will have to pay for. Since most of our population are in the agricultural rural area and are the poor people, they are now pre-destined by our policies to be poor in the future as they pay for the debts mostly hidden in the form for inflation taxes.

How can we talk publicly of being pro-poor if what we do causes and perpetuates the poverty of our people?

(This article reflects the personal views of the author who is a member and past governor of Management Association of the Philippines and chair of De Leon Consulting. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globe.com)

Beware of stock manipulation

BY DENNIS M. ARROYO

TECHNO-JABBERS

THANKS to the impeachment trial, manipulating shares of stock is in the news again.

Stocks, being certificates of company ownership, go up or down depending on various factors. One is the performance of the company. Fat profits mean generous dividends to shareholders. This pushes the stock to rise.

The health of the economy in general also matters. Surging gross domestic product translates into much demand. That may boost the sales of the company, so the stock thrives.

Then consider the social or political climate. A spate of bombings sends fear into the economic system. Investors lose confidence, pulling down stock prices.

But the stock market can also be rocked by shady non-market forces. The word for this is manipulation. Here is a catalogue of cheating: what goes up must have been sent up by some manipulative investor.

A trader can pretend that his favored stock is going through much trading.

All the while he's the one doing the buying and selling.

Another means is the hype-and-dump move.

The manipulators target a "shell" company, or one that is listed in the stock market yet dormant. They buy the outstanding capital stock for a minimal investment. Then the shell is merged with a known private company.

The manipulators take over the merged firm and hire PR people to hype it.

Media promotes the merged company and its stock rises. When the price gets bloated, the manipulators sell out.

The manipulators can try another path, forming a new company.

The Blank Check means offering the stock to the public without providing them a comprehensive business plan. The Blind Pool refers to revealing only general information on the business.

In the Hot Issue, a company only says it will get into a hi-tech venture and hypes that advantage. After the stock price shoots up, they abandon ship.

A manipulator can also spread nasty rumors about certain companies, egging on stockholders to sell their shares. He then buys the shares at an artificially low price and resells them in the market at the actual high price.

In Scalping, the manipulators buy lots of company stock, then recommend the firm to high heavens to other market players. When the price shoots up, the manipulators sell the stock.

Churning means excessive trading of a stock, i.e. to the point where it harms the client investor.

In a Chain Letter rally, the speculators support the moves of the manipulators. They join in the buying spree of the manipulators, even if they know what's really going on. This pushes up the price and volume of stocks traded.

A more common practice is to close strong. Manipulators can buy shares at the close of the trading day. That sends false signals that the true value of the stock is rising, when in fact it isn't.

(Comments to <dmarroyo@hotmail.com>)

Taiwanese . . .

(From page C4)

So far the government has been half-hearted about addressing the problem and relinquishing its control of the state-owned banks, which are largely inefficient and account for the bulk of the system's NPLs.

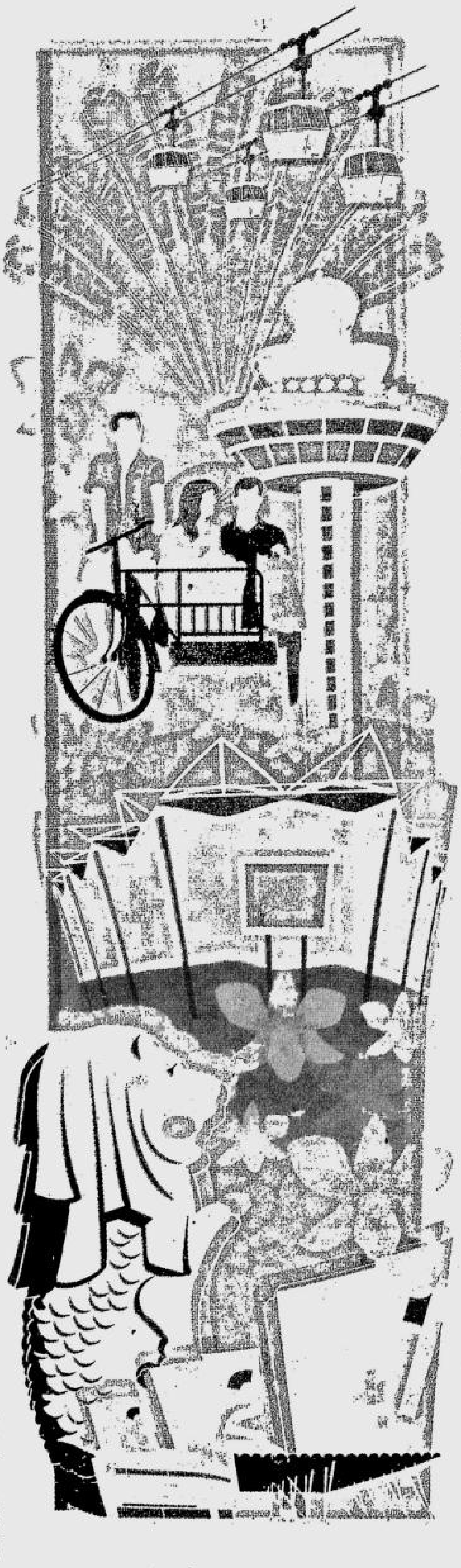
"The biggest inertia to consolidation is the NPL portfolios of the state-owned banks. No one wants to buy them," commented a Taiwanese banker.

The government had earlier broached the idea of merging three of the seven state-owned banks but this has not happened yet.

The attraction to one of the smaller better-run private banks to merge with or take a stake in a state-owned bank without some kind of financial support or guarantee on the asset quality seems relatively limited.

The Taiwan government must act fast to reform and modernize the banking sector so that it is capable of serving the needs of the New Economy.

Political forces play a major role on the island. With the political fate of President Chen Shui Bian hanging in the air, banking reform is likely to take a back seat. This is a luxury that Taiwan cannot afford. Unless the government puts its full weight behind the reform process, the banks are not expected to move anytime soon. *Asian Banker Journal*



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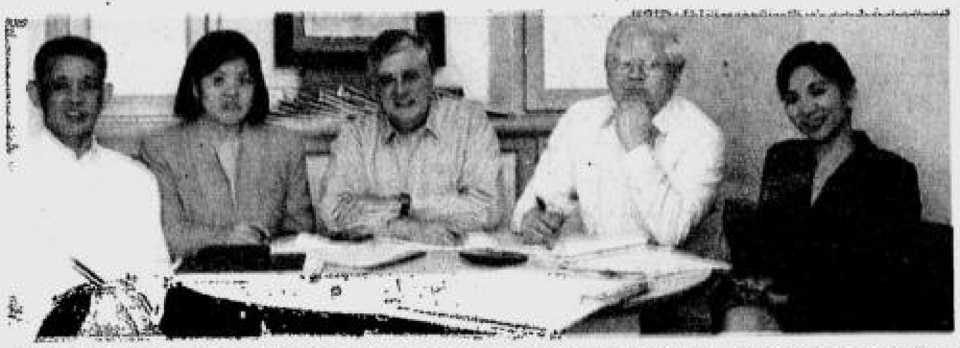

JOSEFINO T. Santos, director, housekeeping services; Zenaida R. Alcantara, controller; Miguel G. Cerqueda, president; Michael L. Cuisia, vice president for marketing; and TK Kho, director for marketing and sales.

Who says a gentleman can't be a good manager?

A CLIENT once remarked: "I hope Señor succeeds in managing our staff with enough discipline; I fear he's too much of a gentlemen to do that."

The client was referring to Miguel Cerqueda, president of Genesis Hotels and Resorts Corporation, known as simply Señor during his Manila Hotel tenure as general manager. Urbane and suave to the point of elitism almost, Cerqueda embodied the Manila Hotel's erstwhile essence as the Grande Dame of Manila's finer hotels in the past. Harsh words and harsher action were as alien to him as goons were to a board meeting.

Thus, the fear of the client corporation's chief executive that Señor Cerqueda was, and is, too gentle for personnel discipline.

Genesis Hotels and Resorts manages and markets for their owners hotels and resorts all over the Philippines. It was set up in August 1999 between Cerqueda and businessman Michael L. Cuisia, with Zeny Alcantara as controller, Tk. Kho as marketing and sales director, and Josefino Santos as director of rooms and services. Among the properties it bandies are the new Pearl Manila Hotel which opens early this month, the Astoria Condotel, and the Atrium Manila Suites.

Cerqueda projects that in six years, Genesis will have about ten properties under its wing.

The current crisis in the country concerns Cerqueda but does not deter him from opening new properties, as in the case now of the Pearl Manila. "We have seen worse conditions," he says, "and we believe any time is a good time to open a good new business."

In terms of business, property management is only 80 percent business, according Cerqueda. The rest is marketing system, systems management and people management.

It is in the last function—people, or personnel, management—that Señor may be deemed too much of a gentleman to be an effective disciplinarian. True or not, this perception is countered, however, by his long experience in the hotel business.

It is a lifetime experience, in fact. He was born in Andorra, a picturesque principality in the Pyrenees between France and Spain, of parents who owned a hotel. Thus, as early as 10 years old, he spent his school vacations working at the Hotel International. A brother now manages the hotel after having taken over in 1980.

At 20, Miguel Cerqueda went to train at the Hotel School in Lausanne, Switzerland. At Cornell University, he met Christine Aguado, 19, from the Philippines, married her, and forged a strong Catholic relationship that sees them living most of the time here in the Philippines.

Cerqueda joined Hotel Intercontinental in 1971 when he was 24 years old, and spent two years in Borubodur, Jakarta. By 1974, he was banquet manager of the 800-room hotel.

In 1975, he was maitre d'hotel of El Castellano, Prince Albert Rotisserie. He spent one year in Saipan, too. "Travelling makes a man grow in his profession," he says.

He joined the Manila Hotel in 1977 as food and beverage manager, and later became its general manager. He was out of the hotel briefly during its sequestered status, but upon Manila Hotel's privatization, Cerqueda was again general manager.

He got out of the hotel in the late 1990s, and set up Genesis Hotels and Resorts Management.

Part of the management services provided by Genesis to its client-hotels is the recommendation of key personnel. For general managers, Genesis has successfully recommended all Filipinos so far—all females.

Ophellia San Juan

Get class A people to work even if projects are class B

By Anthony O. Alcantara

JOHNNY VILLENA

MADRID

THERE is a relaxed, indeed almost casual, feel to the gleaming office of Jonathan R. Madrid, executive director of iAyala Co. Inc. at the Tower One building along Ayala Ave. in Makati City.

Madrid has a framed picture of his wife and first child having fun at a beach in Palawan. He does not have very expensive-looking accent pieces, instead he uses a simple desk set with a cup full of pens and pencils.

MANAGEMENT
STYLES

The man himself usually wears casual clothes to work.

He says the informal atmosphere in his office reflects his management style.

"Work for me is about learning. Once the learning curve is not as steep as I want them, I have to look for something else. And because work for me is about learning, it has to be fun. It just cannot be day-to-day routine work," he says.

Madrid was put at the helm of iAyala to build the Internet-related activities of the Ayala conglomerate. It was formed just last year and it has been busy building up its manpower.

The company acts as a catalyst for the Ayala group in penetrating the rapidly expanding wireless and Internet markets by providing capital, infrastructure and management and technological expertise to entrepreneurs, developers and business partners.

Madrid says his management style is also reflected in the way he recruits his staff.

"The most important characteristic for me, aside from having a basic knowledge of business and some strong interest in technology is the willingness to think differently. I like to call it thinking out of the box, a willingness to take risks and a willingness to do things outside of one's previous background or experience," he explains.

Madrid came to iAyala after a 13-year stint at Citibank and five years experience with the strategic planning department of Ayala Corp. In all his years of working with the corporate sector, Madrid says he always tried to adhere to this mindset to encourage creativity.

Working on project-based initiatives such as iAyala, he says, should not involve a well-defined job scope.

"I'm constantly looking for certain traits, a hunger for learning new things, an appetite for risk and a general interest in technology. High energy level is also important; I tend to have this high energy when I work," he says.

"I would rather work for class A people on a class B project rather than working with class B people on a class A project. I really believe that. It's all about people, " he adds.

Madrid says he would like to be remembered in the Ayala group as someone who brought in a few good people into the company. He says it's more important than revenues.

"It's not a bad idea to hire good people because they can do new things and think of new ideas. That's really what symbolized the Ayala group. We're hiring the next generation managers of the group, new leaders of the next generation," he says.

As a consequence of Madrid's project-based approach in his work, he built a flat organization in iAyala. How? By having no cubicles in the office for easy communication and promoting openness between staff and managers.

Well, there are a few cubicles and Madrid has his own nook, but the cubicles are only for some of the managers and only clear glass separates Madrid's office from the rest of the staff.

Madrid keeps his glass door open, except when discussing sensitive or confidential matters with someone.

Instead of the traditional hierarchical organizational chart with a box at the top and many boxes below, the official pictures iAyala's chart as a collection of circles forming a loop with a circle in the middle representing the team leader.

"At the end of the day it doesn't matter who's at the top or who's below. The real acid test is how well the information flows, how quickly decisions are made and how we draw out the wanted behavior," he says.

Madrid, who finished his Bachelor of Science in Economics degree at The Wharton School in University of Pennsylvania in the US, is not a techie guy. He believes technology companies are not really about technology.

"It's about new ways to run a business. In other words, a new kind of behavior. The Internet is only a tool to help us run businesses better. It's a great tool," says Madrid.

He also believes that the new economy is not about competition but about finding strengths, identifying it and acting on them quickly.

"We would love to work with other Philippine companies and fight for markets abroad. The Internet is all about forging partnerships because no company will be successful doing it alone," he says.

Though the way businesses operate in the Internet world is constantly changing, Madrid has no plans of becoming overwhelmed or left behind by technology. Pointing at the small dinosaur replica on his table, he says, "That's just a reminder of what I shouldn't become. I don't want to be extinct."

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BUSINESS*Monday*

Taiwanese banks due for a wake-up call

BANKING reforms in Taiwan are progressing at a snail's pace due to politics and the government's half-hearted approach. The latter is popularly being targeted as the only machine that could move things up a notch.

All eyes have been on Taiwanese banks lately, and for good reason. The non-performing loan (NPL) problem of the system is worsening from day to day, leading to whispers of a banking crisis among investors and the media.

Although the official government NPL ratio is 6.3 percent, it is common knowledge that in reality, the asset quality is much worse. Bankers and analysts are placing their bets on 12 percent at least, with the total amount at NT$2 trillion.

The reason for the discrepancy is that Taiwanese banks are not required by the authorities to recognize a loan as non-performing until the interest and principal payments are not met for six months. The international practice is to classify a loan as bad when the borrower has defaulted on repayments for three months.

Also, Taiwanese banks often do not classify restructured loans as NPLs and there are strong suspicions that such loans, especially those extended to troubled corporates, are growing into a sizeable chunk.

"What worries me is that such loans have been reclassified by many banks as Long Term Account Receivables. As a result, the more restructured loans there are, the less reliable the banks' financial figures," said Peter Cutler, a banking analyst with rating agency Fitch IBCA.

Another dark cloud on the horizon is the banks' exposure to troubled local conglomerates—to the tune of some NT$200 billion. This is partly the result of the banks' unhealthy and incestuous links with these corporates as well as politically influenced lending under the previous Kuomintang regime.

To make matters worse, the banks are not providing sufficient loan reserves for bad loans. According to Fitch IBCA's estimates, the banks' loan loss reserves currently covers only 21.6 percent of problematic assets as at end June.

But the pertinent question is whether a financial crisis is imminent in Taiwan. The answer is no.

First of all, the Taiwanese economy is powering ahead and is expected to grow 6.5 percent this year. Export growth, although slowing, is supporting the economy.

Second, the level of problematic loans is not as high as in countries that were hit by the Asian financial crisis.

Therefore, it is unlikely that the current level of NPLs will threaten the health of the entire banking system. Also, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) is currently studying proposals to set up an asset management company (AMC).

The AMC to be formed sometime next year will relieve the banks of their NPLs.

The more disturbing and serious problem plaguing the system today is the snail's pace at which the system is moving towards consolidation—at a time when banks all over the region have woken up to the fact that big is beautiful and size is imperative to survival.

The Taiwanese banking sector has been extremely overcrowded and fragmented over the last decade. There are 52 licensed banks on the island, none of which controls more than 10 percent of the market. In addition, there are about 400 credit unions and cooperative banks. For a long time, the banking industry in Taiwan has operated under a high degree of government control. Privatization of the banking sector was initiated only in mid-1997.

Consolidations are urgently needed for the banks to pool their resources—to make the necessary investments in IT and to prepare for greater foreign competition—given the current government's yearning for a more liberalized market.

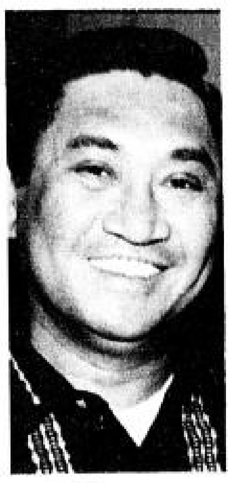
Left to their own devices, however, the consolidation process is likely to be slow. Large corporate groups own many of the commercial banks. They are unlikely to relinquish control, as a certain amount of prestige has been associated with their ownership over the years.

Although the government has raised the single ownership limit from 15 to 25 percent recently, the legislature had not passed the Merger and Acquisition Bill at press time. There is also an absence of tax incentives for banks to merge.

"Just putting in place the enabling legislation is not a sufficient catalyst. There needs to be government sponsorship of mergers or an invitation to foreign banks to take majority stakes in local banks," commented Keith Irving, banking analyst with Merrill Lynch.

There are certainly a number of foreign banks interested in expanding in Taiwan, such as Standard Chartered Bank, HSBC, Citibank and ABN Amro Bank, Irving added.

TAIWANESE/ C2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Businessmen speak their minds

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CHINESE businessmen are known to be among the most conservative. Their opinions are hardly heard regarding politics, nor business.

But Filipino businessmen are more vocal and their voices rang loud and clear the past few days.

Business Monday includes here quotes and statements made by some of the top business leaders following the controversial vote of the Senate that prevented the impeachment court from opening a second envelope from Equitable PCI Bank. It was said to contain evidence that would have proven the President guilty of graft and corruption.

"I don't believe there will be any reconciliation with the President, except for the people who are with him now and need favors to stay in business," Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club.

"We will continue our protest actions until Estrada steps down . . . Our market is dead. The next people who will be jobless are us," Vivian Yuchengco, governor of the Philippine Stock Exchange who led the walkout of PSE employees last week.

"Everybody will have to do their bit in creating an environment that will not be embarrassing when we pass it on to our children," Ricardo Pascua, president of the Management Association of the Philippines.

"The 11 senator-judges, together with the President, have lost all authority to hold office. We ask them and all Cabinet members who value truth and justice to immediately relinquish their posts and allow the constitutional process of change to take place so that we can begin to rebuild the nation," joint statement from various business groups.

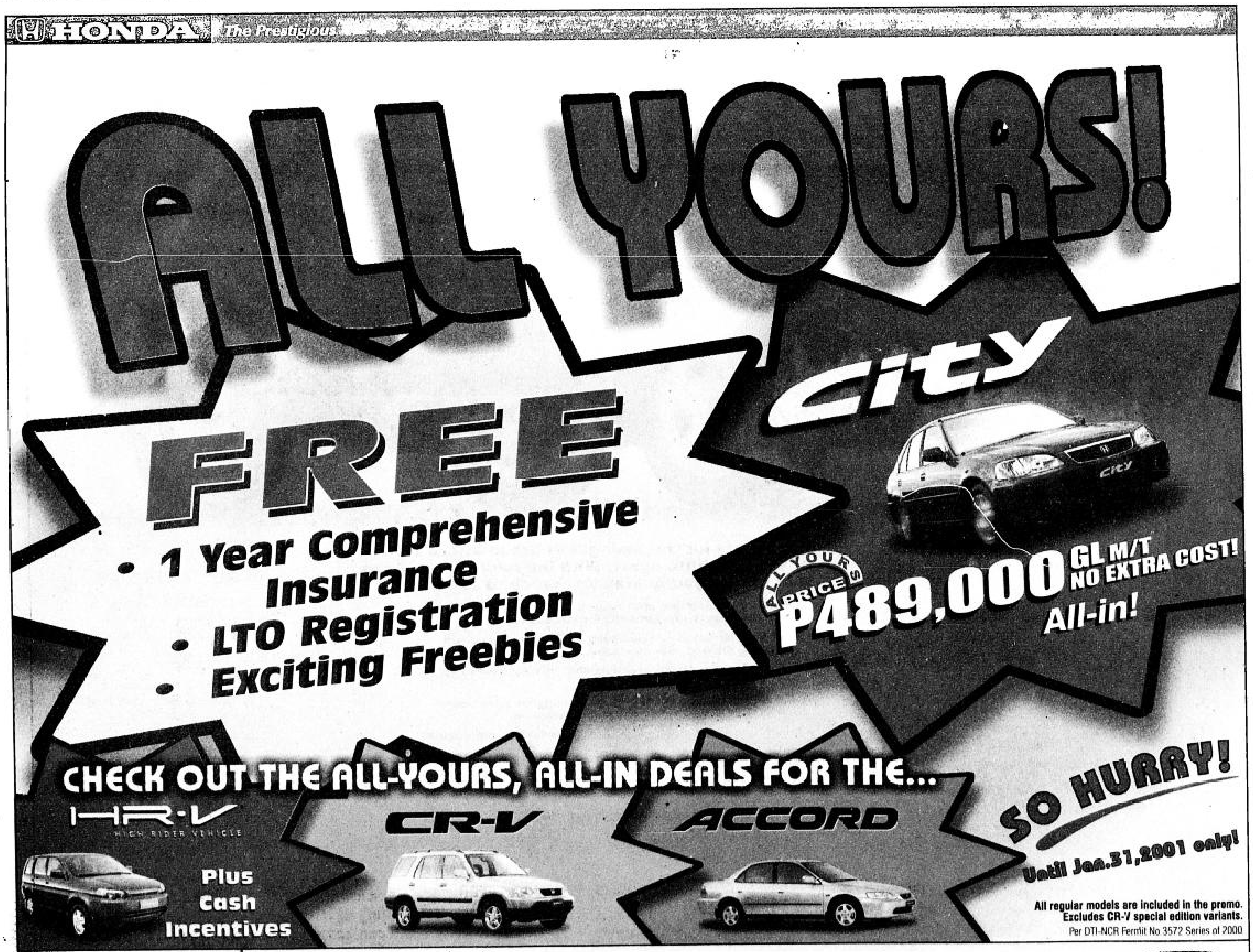
"The problems of the economy have everything to do with the lack of confidence on the President and those problems will be resolved only if leadership is resolved by his (President Estrada's) resignation," former Finance secretary Ramon del Rosario Jr.

We are appalled and disheartened because Senator Tatad had chosen to be on the side of those who would not want to look at available evidence. Our disillusionment stems from your having been presented with a great opportunity to make a difference and your refusing to take it," former Central Bank Governor Jose L. Cuisia Jr. and former Finance secretary Jesus Estanislao in an open letter to Sen. Francisco Tatad.

"I am disappointed with the decision to suppress the truth. My decision to resign was made in prayer," Norberto Nazareno, president of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. who tendered his resignation following the Senate vote.

"I was really affected by what happened Tuesday night especially when all of my children went to Edsa to express their disgust and join the other protesters. I have never tried to influence their views but I must say this has to be the beginning of another Edsa revolution," Raul T. Concepcion, president of the Federation of Philippine Industries.

"The Senate decision set back efforts to rebuild international confidence in the country," Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, Ayala Corp. chair.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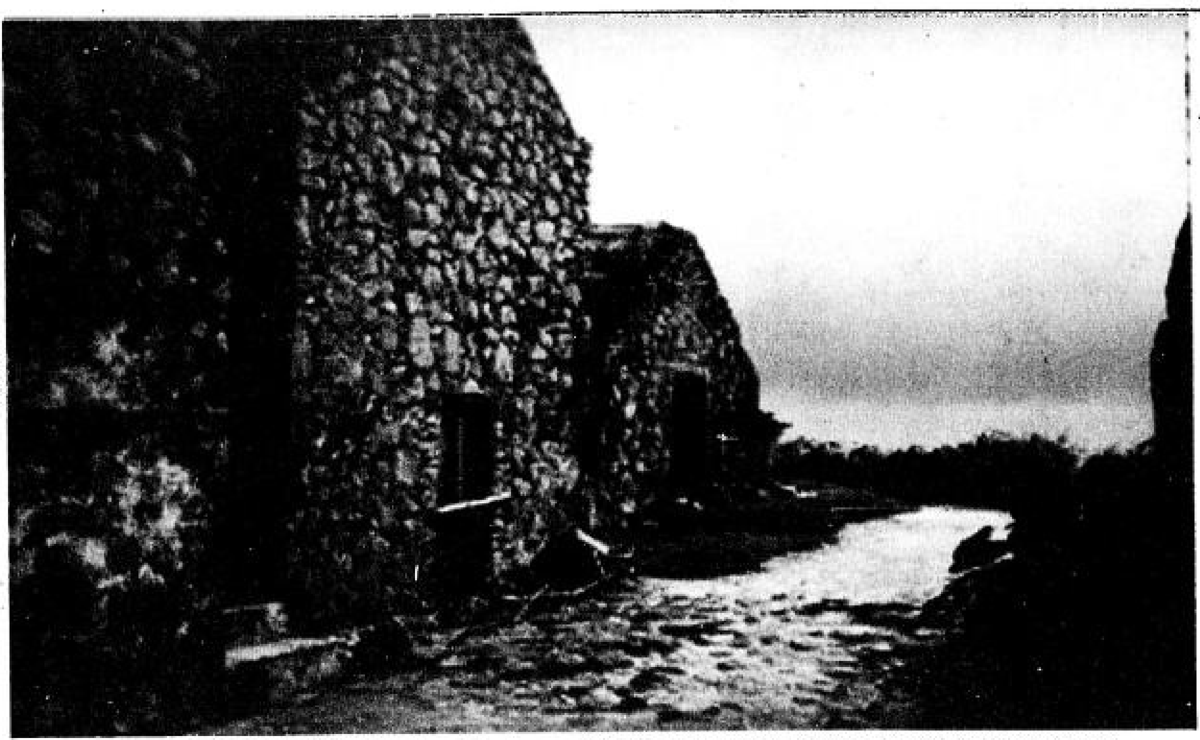

CHAVAYAN on Sabtang Island in Batanes used to be one of the best-preserved villages of traditional houses in the Philippines before being severely damaged by an earthquake last year.

Damaged heavily by the little reported Intensity-7 quake last July, the exquisite storm-tossed islands in the far north of the country is struggling to rebuild its unique architectural and cultural landscape

Lessons from Batanes

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

THE REMOTE Batanes group of islands in the north is set to be nominated by the Philippine government and the Batanes provincial government for inscription in the Unesco World Heritage List in 2001. Situated off the northernmost tip of the Philippines, the cluster is close to the southern tip of Taiwan. Since distance and unpredictable weather conditions isolate the islands most of the year, many of their cultural traditions, landscape and folk architecture have remained intact, safeguarded from erosion by outside influences.

The nationally protected seascape and landscape of intense beauty is well known in the Philippines and well qualified for Unesco World Heritage inscription as a "living cultural landscape," illustrating a long-continuing interaction of man and nature that has resulted in a unique landscape.

The landscape of Batanes is indeed unique. Both its landscape and seascape respond to the frequent monsoons and strong winds that batter its islands.

The low houses of Batanes, with their heavy stone walling covered with thick thatched roofs, are not found anywhere else in the Philippines. They have evolved in response to the severe conditions of the Batanes climate that is dominated by heavy wind, monsoon rains, and severe typhoons.

In July 2000, an earthquake that registered Intensity 7 on the Richter Scale devastated the Batanes archipelago, destroying 80 percent of the stone houses and public buildings. The waterworks system of the provincial capital, Basco, was totally destroyed. The effects of the aftershocks ranging from Intensity 2 to 3 continued one month after the disaster, further weakening the already fragile structures.

As a result of the earthquake, the province remains under a state of calamity. Since no disaster management plan existed to effectively manage damage from unpredictable natural calamities, the islands' devastated structures remain at high risk until a well-planned reconstruction program is carried out with technical expertise from conservation architects.

Modest rebuilding

Provincial authorities have begun implementing very modest reconstruction programs using strong community involvement to rebuild the destroyed structures. Observing that recently constructed structures sustained more damage than traditional housing, local authorities decided to reconstruct the damaged structures in the traditional manner rather than use modern construction. Therefore the focus of the reconstruction program is to restore damaged structures using traditional craftsmanship and natural materials. Otherwise there is a strong threat that modern architectural designs will change the traditional scenery of the cultural landscape. The immediate goals of the project are: (a) to rehabilitate damaged public buildings and private houses; (b) to revive traditional construction methods under guidance of proper technical expertise; and (c) to enhance the cultural qualities of the villages.

The reconstruction will provide new income-generating opportunities for the community. It will revive vanishing craftsmanship and appreciation and use of natural materials such as natural lime as well as thatch for roofing. Reconstructing after the disaster provides the fortuitous opportunity to upgrade the outdated infrastructure in the villages and the road network in the different islands of the archipelago.

A survey has been completed to identify recipients who qualify for a grant for repair and

LESSONS/ p.D2

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Lessons from Batanes

(From page D1)

rehabilitation of their houses and structures. Assistance is limited to the purchase of stones, lime, steel reinforcement (if necessary), *cogon* (thatch) and other materials. In keeping with the local tradition of *yaru* (traditional volunteerism), all beneficiaries shall supply the labor for reconstruction.

Recipients of rehabilitation aid will be required to maintain their houses and public buildings in their authentic form. Legislation shall be solicited from the Local Government Unit (LGU) to further encourage the beneficiaries to maintain the authenticity of their houses through tax exemption and other rebate schemes. As an additional income-generating opportunity for the residents, the reconstructed houses shall be available for tourist "home stay" programs that offer bed and breakfast.

TYPICAL of Batanes towns, the rigid geometry of Chavayan, where rectangular houses stand on both sides of narrow, straight streets, provides a vista that sweeps either to the mountains that ring the village or to the seashore.

Traditional architecture

The long-range objectives of the project are (a) to promote and ensure the continuous use of authentic traditional architecture in the Batanes archipelago; (b) to revive traditional construction craftsmanship; (c) to financially assist the rebuilding of their quake-devastated houses; and (d) to provide additional income-earning opportunities by establishing a sustainable community-based ecotourism program.

Although the organizational stage of the project is complete, the slow trickle of funds seriously hampers the implementation. Many of the aid recipients have become impatient and some have already repaired their homes using concrete and other non-traditional materials.

It is significant to note that no mechanism exists whatsoever in the Philippines to come to the aid of heritage damaged by natural disasters. This is especially ironic since the Philippines is a disaster-prone country that faces unpredictable calamities such as earthquakes, typhoons and volcanic eruptions. In a country where it is a struggle to make the public conscious of the value of its heritage, it seems authorities are either hard-pressed or oblivious to the need for schemes that address possible threats to cultural heritage posed by natural disasters.

RISING above *cogon* roofs, the baroque curls of the façade of rural Chavayan chapel built by the Dominicans recall the majestic sweep of the mountains behind it.

The Batanes archipelago is a premier cultural heritage location in the Philippines. Its people realize that their unique traditions provide the special quality that ensures the perpetuation of the site as a living cultural landscape. For their culture and cultural landscape to continue living, they must struggle to find the right balance between tradition and modernization.

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Able-bodied in art and life

By Gino Dormiendo

THEY are a unique group of painters, seriously handicapped by various physical disabilities that could have permanently maimed them for the rest of their lives. Afflicted by debilitating illnesses, grave deformities at birth, and serious injuries resulting from accidents, they have overcome great odds, transforming their weaknesses into strength, reshaping their humanity through the liberating force of art.

Known as "foot and mouth artists," they have all learned to draw and paint with brush held in the mouth or between their toes.

Amado Dulnuan was, for one, born without arms 43 years ago. Despite his handicap, he persevered by regularly attending school, later enrolling at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts. In 1980, his watercolor painting won first prize in a nationwide contest. In 1983, he received the first prize in an international competition in London. He has also held a solo exhibition of his works. He is married, with two children, and has a house of his own in Cainta, Rizal.

Victor Largosa, 40, acquired his disability from a diving accident in 1984. A native of Carcar, Cebu, he first studied architecture at the Cebu Institute of Technology and later worked as a draftsman in a construction company. Having been abandoned by his wife after he was incapacitated, he works doubly hard to raise his two daughters.

Bernard Pesigan, 32, figured in an accident while driving his motorbike. Since 1988 (the year he met an accident), he has been paralyzed from his neck down. He later met Jovito Sasutona, a mouth painter, who encouraged him to paint.

Sasutona, like Largosa, injured his spinal column while swimming in a pool in Antipolo. As a result, he lost the use of his hands and has since been bound to a wheelchair. The 37-year-old paraplegic later learned to write and paint, and with Dulnuan's help, was convinced to join the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists.

Benjie Baylon, 40, was, like Dulnuan, a polio victim at childhood. Learning to paint at age 7, he overcame his handicap through art. He joined the group in 1992.

Rogelio Francisco, 34, the group's newest member, had a cervical injury 12 years ago, which left him a quadriplegic, unable to use his arms and legs. As a self-taught painter, he learned to paint by gripping a brush between his teeth.

Grim prospects

These foot and mouth painting artists, as they are known, could have faced the grim prospects of miserable existence reserved for people with disability in this country. But thanks to the Association of Mouth and Foot Artists Worldwide, people with disability can strive to become models of self-help. Founded in 1956 by a pioneering group of disabled Swiss and German artists, all of whom painted without the use of their hands, the association is an alliance—of both the artists and the public—in which members can aspire to a life of security and material independence.

The organization's chief avenue in achieving this alliance is art, which comes by way of exhibitions, sale of original works and negotiating copyright deals with publishers for the use of the art works reproduced on postcards and calendars. In return, the association provides regular members regular financial support through subsidies and exposures in other countries.

Today, the association, with headquarters at the principality of Liechtenstein, covers virtually all regions of the world, from Europe to Africa, with 50 countries and over 350 artists as full-time members. The Philippines is represented by the aforementioned artists, whose works are being marketed and distributed by the local chapter of the AMFPA headed by Betty Tee, a business entrepreneur with a philanthropic heart, as its local managing director.

All these painters, with the exception of Dulnuan, are largely self-taught, having learned the rudiments of art through their own initiative and discipline. Their model is the AMFPA founder and longtime president Arnulf Erich Stegmann, himself born with a disability but later learning to paint with his mouth. It is largely through his efforts that the association has gained international following and the patronage of well-known personalities from government, the arts and culture.

Proving themselves

Dulnuan, being the most senior of the Filipinos in the group, has exhibited his works in various places here and abroad. Together with other member-artists from various parts of the world, he attended the AMFPA's international gathering in Taiwan in 1991. In 1997, he traveled to Vienna, Austria to attend the group's 40th anniversary. Dulnuan paints with his feet.

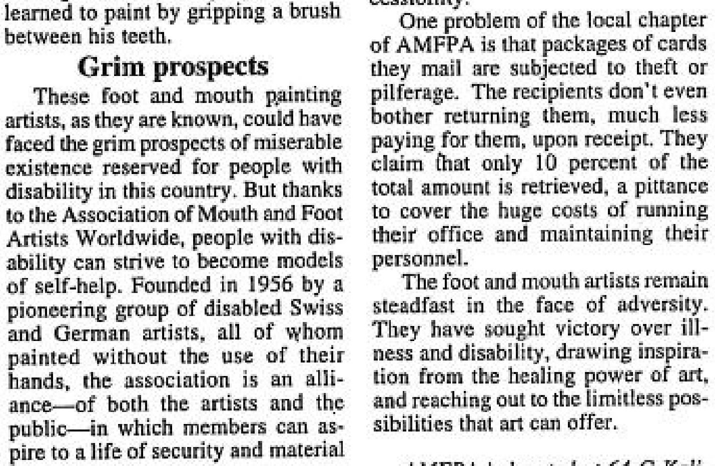
Baylon, on the other hand, paints with his mouth. In a representative work, "Summer Fruits," a still life which was reproduced for the AMFPA calendar, he captures the vivid and seductive appeal of local tropical fruits, dramatically enhanced by an arrangement of flowers in the background. Sasutona, also using his mouth, has an entry in the same calendar. Titled "Study in Yellow," the oil painting provides a seductive contrast of yellow and reds of the flowers in a vase, complemented by a melange of greens in the background.

Like all people with handicaps, these artists ask not for pity or charity, but understanding and respect from society. They ask for their inalienable rights of mobility and accessibility.

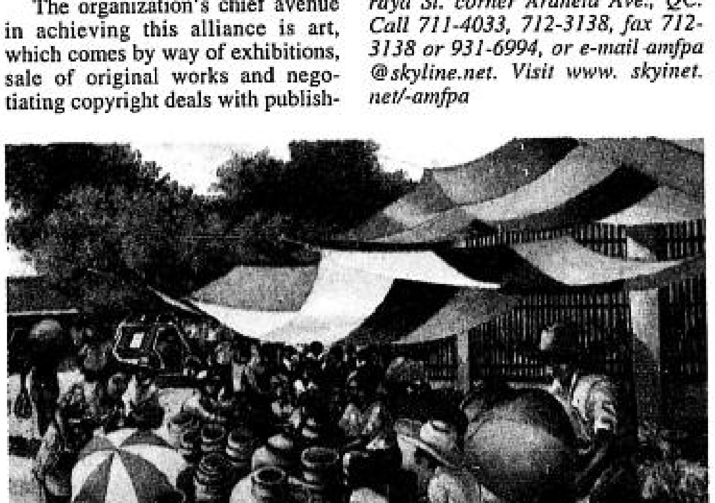
One problem of the local chapter of AMFPA is that packages of cards they mail are subjected to theft or pilferage. The recipients don't even bother returning them, much less paying for them, upon receipt. They claim that only 10 percent of the total amount is retrieved, a pittance to cover the huge costs of running their office and maintaining their personnel.

The foot and mouth artists remain steadfast in the face of adversity. They have sought victory over illness and disability, drawing inspiration from the healing power of art, and reaching out to the limitless possibilities that art can offer.

AMFPA is located at 64-G Kaliraya St. corner Araneta Ave., QC. Call 711-4033, 712-3138, fax 712-3138 or 931-6994, or e-mail amfpa@skyline.net. Visit www.skyinet.net/-amfpa

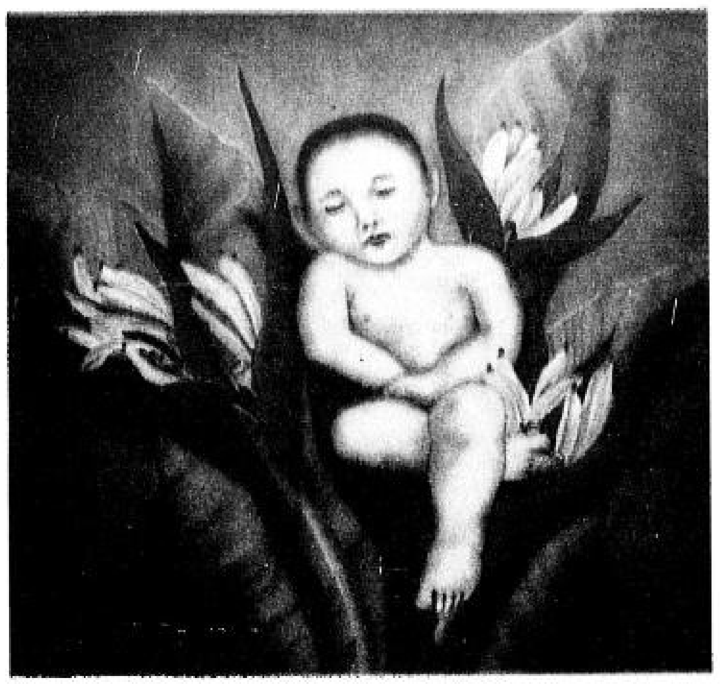


"POT Vendors," oil painting by B. Baylon

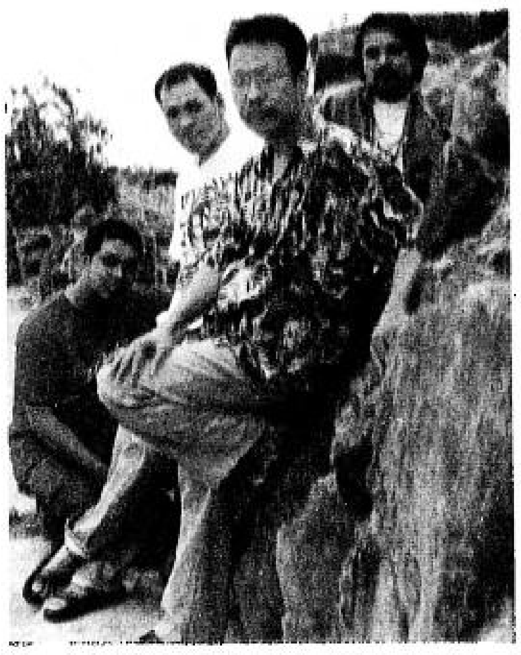


"GOLDEN Farm," oil painting by V. Largosa

Escora at Boston Gallery; three artists at the Artist Run Space



"PEACEFUL Sleep," acrylic, by Reggie Macapagal, on view at the Crimson Art Gallery



ESTILO Kuwatro, from left, Dion Francisco, Ranilo Zapanta, Rodie Julian and Ronald Limayo

VISUAL ARTS

KIKO Escora opens his first solo exhibit of recent works dubbed "Café Ennui" at Boston Gallery, 72 Boston St. corner Lantana, Cubao, QC, on Feb. 3, 6 p.m. The exhibit runs until Feb. 28. Call 722-9205.

THREE ARTISTS AT THE ARTIST RUN SPACE. Wire Tuazon, Jayson Oliveria and Kreskin Sugay present "Dominance and Submissions," a group exhibit which features large-scale paintings at the Artist Run Space. Louie Cordero is holding his first solo exhibit, "Knowing Evil Will Prevail," at the Kitchen. At the Stockroom, Lena Co is holding "Adventures in Living" (volume 2), an installation exhibit utilizing paper planes. These three exhibits will run until Jan. 31 at the Surrounded by Water Gallery at 187-A Arte Square, Edsa, Mandaluyong City. Call 724-2027 or e-mail sbw05@yahoo.com.

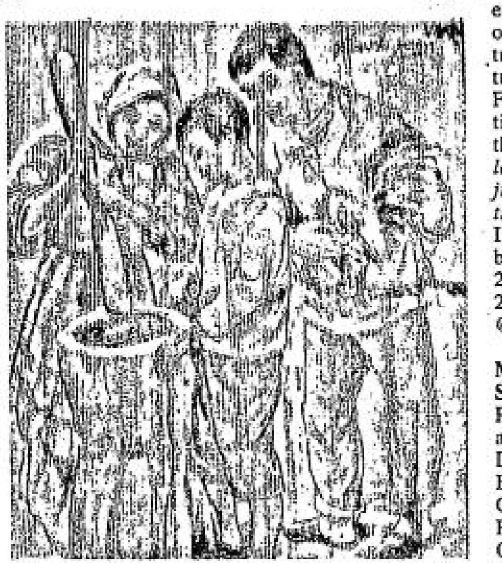
EXHIBIT KKK AT BISTRO 110. The Creative Guild of the Phils. holds its first-ever painting exhibit at Bistro 110, Carlos Palanca Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Dubbed "Exhibit KKK: Ang Koleksiyon ng Kreatib na May K," the exhibit runs until Jan. 26. Call 810-1901 or 813-4397.

'ESTILO KUWATRO' AT NEMIRANDA ARTHOUSE. The Nemiranda Arthouse holds a four-man show dubbed "Estilo Kuwatro." Participating artists include Dion Francisco, Rodie Julian, Ronald Limayo and Ranilo Zapanta. The exhibit is at the 4/L Building A, SM Megamall Edsa, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit runs until Jan. 30.

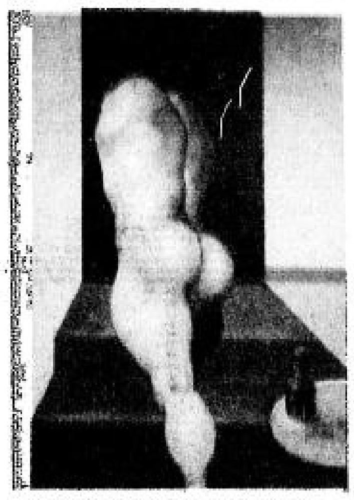
ABAD AT THE LOPEZ MUSEUM. Pacita Abad holds her first exhibit for the year dubbed "Unfurled," the first exhibit of the Lopez Memorial Museum for the year 2001. The exhibit features two huge works of the artist that belong to the collection of the Lopez Museum, "Recluse" and "My Fear of Night Diving," both textile works. The exhibit runs until Feb. 9 at the Benpres Building, Meralco Avenue corner Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 631-2417.

'SHEER REALITIES' AT THE MET. The National Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Manila present "Sheer Realities: Clothing and Power in 19th Century Philippines." The exhibit will run until Feb. 3 at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. Call 523-7855.

TWIGG AT GALLERIA DUEMILA. Noted Australian artist Tony Twigg will be holding an exhibit dubbed "Spontaneous Architecture" at the Galleria Duemila, 4/F SM Megamall, Edsa, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit will run from Feb. 7-28. Call 831-9990, telefax 833-9815 or 633-6687. E-mail duemila@info.com.ph.



"NOON After Five," acrylic on banana stalk, by Alvaro Jimenez, on view at the Genluna Gallery, Davao City.



"TEMPORARY Escape" by Kiko Escora, on view at the Boston Gallery.

JIMENEZ AT GENLUNA GALLERY. Noted banana artist Alvaro Jimenez holds an exhibit "Ang Pinoy" at Genluna Gallery, Davao City. The exhibit showcases his latest works about Filipino idiosyncrasies in the 19th-century traditional form. It features 15 genre paintings of Filipino customs and traditions replete with turn-of-the-century settings: *panuelos, panuelita, baro't saya, jusi* barongs, white pants, *tsinelas* and the ubiquitous Iloco *tabako* all painted on banana stalk. Call (082) 226-2104 and telefax (082) 221-0296 or e-mail genluna@mozcom.com.

MACAPAGAL AT CRIMSON ART GALLERY. Reggie Macapagal presents an exhibit titled "Rod's Dream (A Tribute to My Brother)" at the Crimson Art Gallery, 140 Katipunan Road, St. Ignatius Village, QC. The exhibit features a collection of recent works of the artist, which runs until Jan. 31.

A show of Filipino masters

GALERIA de las Islas starts the new year with an exhibit of Filipino masters, including National Artist in Sculpture Napoleon Abueva, Manuel Rodriguez Sr., known as the father of Filipino printmaking, and other highly acclaimed artists such as Lee Aguinaldo, Roberto Chabet, Rodolfo Ragodon, Rene Robles, Manuel Rodriguez Jr. and Solomon Saprid. Titled "Art of the Masters," the exhibit is ongoing until Jan. 24.

Among the works to be exhibited are "Wrapped in Swaddling Clothes" cast bronze and narra by Abueva, plus other pieces which show Abueva's wide ranging versatility in different media such as "See Your Profiles," a constructional innovation using mirrors and wood, "Socrates: To Live or To Die" in fiberglass and the Circumcision of Rizal" in narra.

Other works on exhibit are Rodriguez's prints, Chabet's collage "House with Red U.F.O.," Aguinaldo's "Homage to Saul Stienbergn" and Saprid's "Tikbalang" series in pastel, charcoal and watercolor.

Galeria de las Islas is at 3/F Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. Gallery hours are 9 a.m.-6 p.m. daily, including Sundays and holidays. The public is cordially invited to this rare assemblage of fine Filipino master works. Call 527-2113.

Postmodernism marked visual arts last year

By Jeannie E. Javelosa

I WOULD like to think that the new year will usher in new directions in the visual arts. Last year, there was a proliferation of artworks that pushed postmodernism to exhaustion. It was a dreary year for the scene as the plastic arts' evolution continued their repetitious overworked mannerisms so prevalent in the last decade of the millennium.

Today, I experience a death watch of sorts: A subtle despair overcomes me as I stare into the landscape. So much of the art in the country relies on formulas that are time-tested and monetarily guaranteed. To be fair, the regional and international scenes also suffer the same fate. There is a great lack of authenticity. Hybrid expressions, culled and composed from remnants of overseas expression, call themselves progressives.

So much of the output today looks extremely sophisticated but is in content shallow. While there are some novel pieces that have cropped up now and then, these are only appreciated by the culturati; they quickly disappear in the noisy colorful maze and labyrinth of techno-pop culture.

Even the 13 Artists Award Show of the CCP and the Philip Morris Art Awards, two prestigious competition-exhibits, have failed to bring forth something truly exciting.

Sure, there were some clever pieces, artsy and novel—but most were not grounded on deeper philosophies or ways of seeing. Most were bent on hugging surfaces, offering a plethora of images, yet avoiding deeper content.

Perhaps the culprit here is patronage. Local artists are forced, due to economic reasons, to cater to a market. Unfortunately, the market they cater to, while not lacking in appreciation, is a lazy, adolescent one that seeks to understand only what can be easily understood as traditionally beautiful (i.e. figurative works, traditional scenes, nonthreatening abstracts and expressionist images). The more progressive forms that push the visual arts scene to broader horizons (both in the horizontal and vertical movements of change) are often not understood and chances are, will not find a market.

Computer

I was reflecting upon the news of a recent opening of an Internet access for art. It was stirring some excitement in the scene. While this allows for cross-cultural exchanges, this is first and foremost a marketing tool and a venue of commercial exchanges.

I guess it will help our artists economically, but can it help the progress of art locally? The true significance of art has been forgotten. The expressions of the visual arts are reduced to commodity and worse, to mere ego expressions.

Art is said to be the child of its age. If this is so, then it reflects back to us a state of consciousness that is sadly stagnating, a horizontal land focused on the world, its materialist values and struggles.

Artists paint how they perceive the world. Their art is dependent on their world view—either as rationalists who paint still lifes and landscapes; as objectivists whose mental power deconstructs reality into various dimensions; as subjective expressionists whose emotional and romanticist fervors predominate; or as staunch naturalists/nationalists who seek inspiration from indigenous roots. Each world view validates each individual perception as true.

The problem I see, however, is that majority of the artists has become comfortable in the horizontal level of their world view. Art has not exhausted itself. But it is safe to say that the artists' world views have stagnated. Many of them just keep on perfecting technical skills and rehashing compositional forms. Or perhaps such artists are not alive to their specific chosen level of reality. The results are tired-looking still lifes, sentimental protest art, fanatical religious imagery that holds no meaning, or allows no transformation.

Significant art

What would make art today significant? How can art today be more authentic? Would there be need of exceptional circumstances for creativity to flourish so that exceptional artists can rise once more? Or would it only mean that artists must use and see the world a little differently, digging deeper into their consciousness. By doing this, they transform world views and break through habitual, stagnant perceptions.

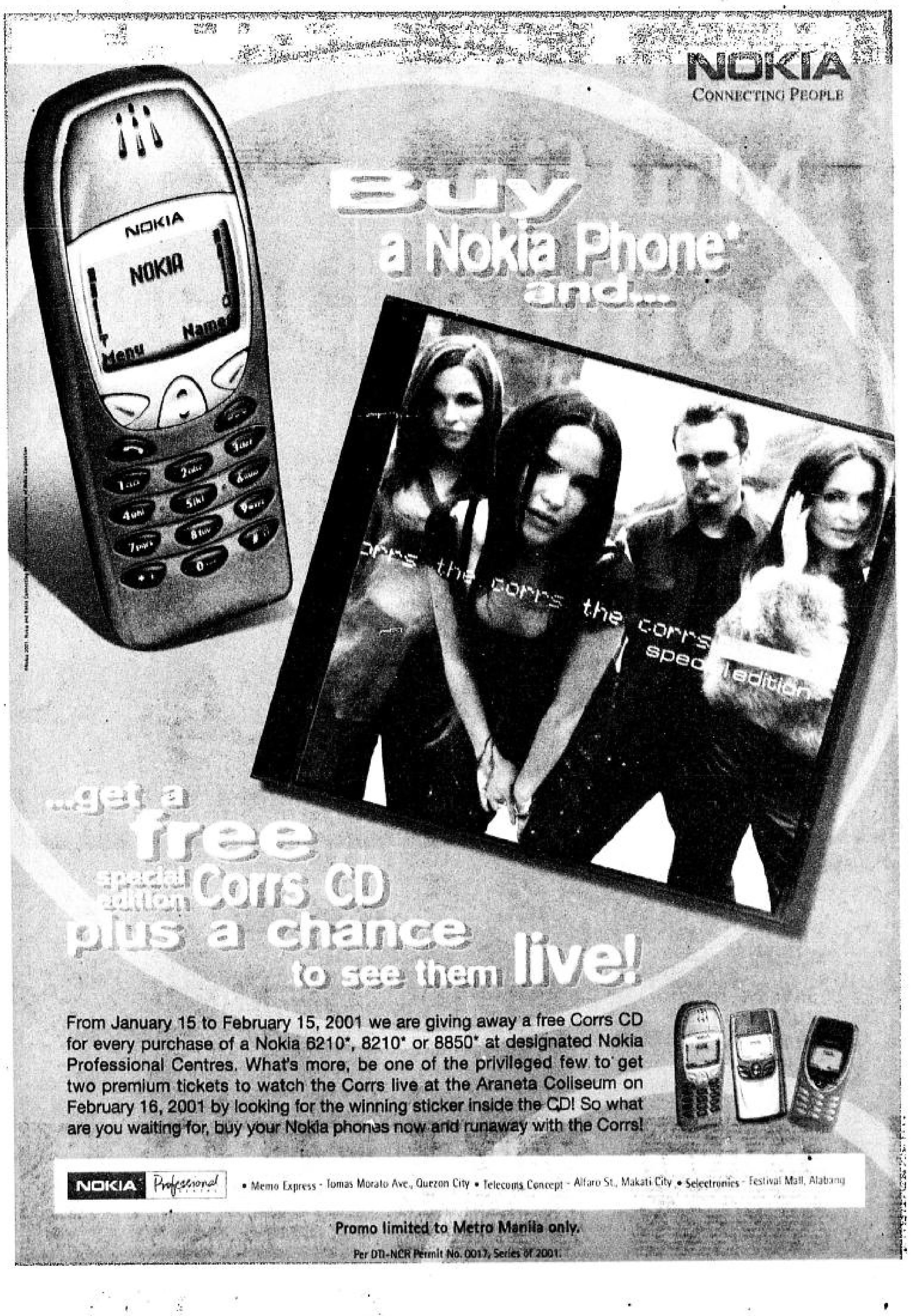
In a time when everything is energized by change, where transformation, in all aspects of society, culture and man's consciousness is taking place, what is the challenge for art today?

I believe the focus should not be just on the object expressed. Beyond surfaces and images, we should try to focus our attention on the depth of the artist expressing it. To make art that celebrates both the depth and span of the artist's consciousness, of the artist's expressions in creating his own realities connected to the world today—is the challenge for painters, sculptors and printmakers.

If art is to continue as a child of its age, then it must seek and express the essence of its age. If new energies suggest new perceptions, then we are moving toward developing the vertical level of growth.

Art must reflect the rising wave. Art must ride high on it. This will happen only when the artists themselves seek greater depth in their thoughts and experiences. New directions in art will happen only when artists open their own psyches to growth.

Until together, the artist and his art create currents that touch hearts, moving to create inner transformations for the viewers. Only then can they bring forth, from their souls, the true spirit of creativity that creates authentic, transformative art.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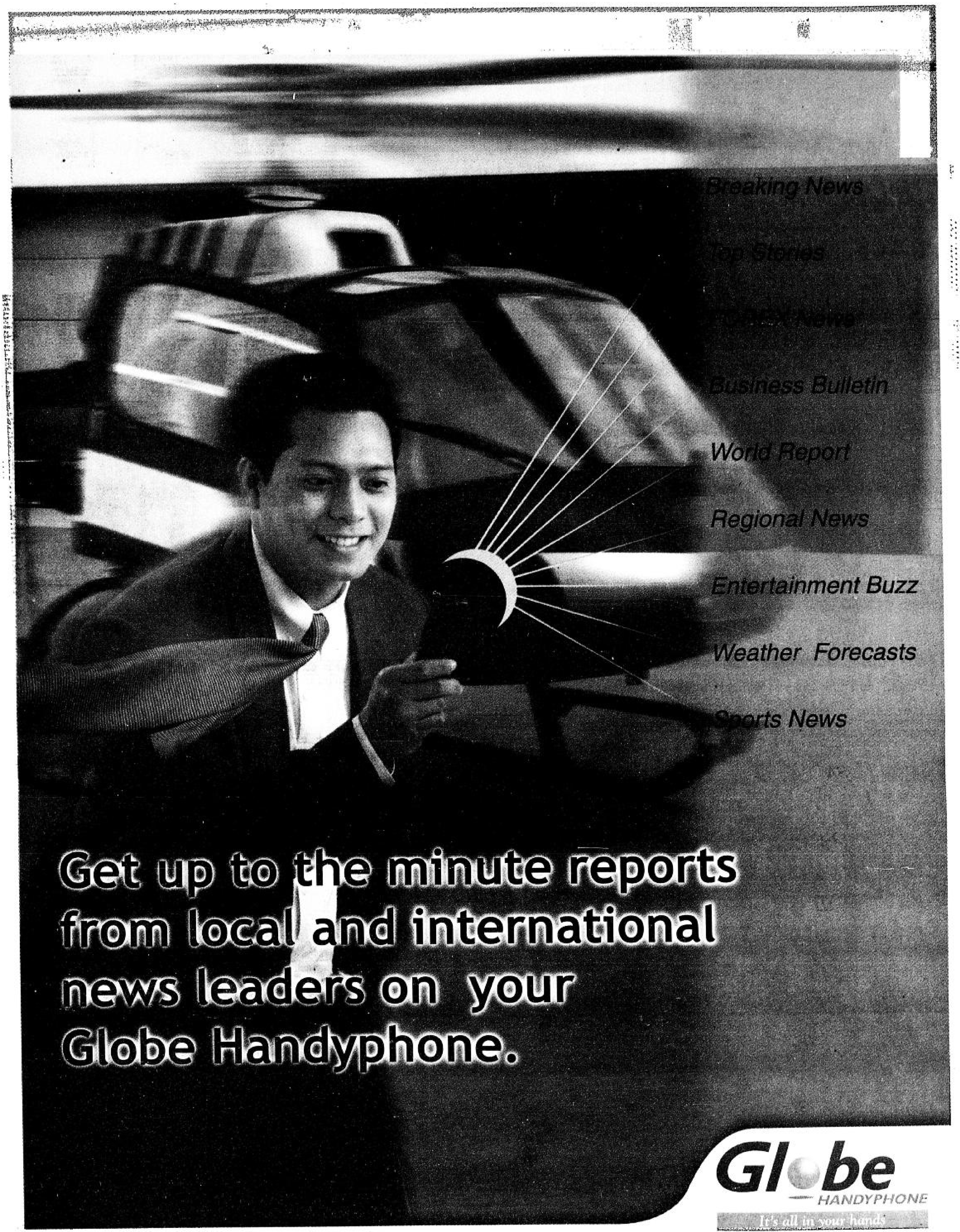
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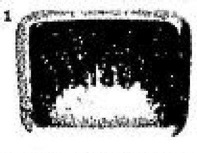
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LIFESTYLE

DON Sergio Osmeña High School wins first place in the High School Category of Kabataan Sa Dakbayan sa Sugbo.

Sinulog mixes politics and religion

By Mozart A.T. Pastrano
Photos by Junjie Mendoza

News that Malacañang has been vacated ignited a people power celebration in Cebu

CEBU is most itself as Queen City of the South at this time of year when it celebrates the Sinulog, a mardi gras in honor of the Sto. Niño.

SINULOG/ p.E3

LAHUG Elementary School, first place, Elementary Category

Do you have an unusual love story?

IF you do, write us about it. Tell us in 1,000 words or less what makes it unusual. Webster defines "unusual" as "not common, not ordinary or exceptional." To that we have to add two more conditions: your love story should be true and you and your partner must still be together. Include with the story your full name, address, telephone number and—if available—mobile phone number and e-mail address.

E-mail your entries to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph or send them to "Love Stories" c/o Lifestyle, PDI, P.O. Box 2353, Makati Central Office, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague Street, Makati City.

Sorry, no faxed entries will be accepted. Entries should be received at the INQUIRER offices **no later than Jan. 31.**

The five most extraordinary love stories sent in by readers —as adjudged by the Lifestyle staff—will be featured in our Valentines issue. Each winning pair will also get a restaurant certificate for dinner for two.

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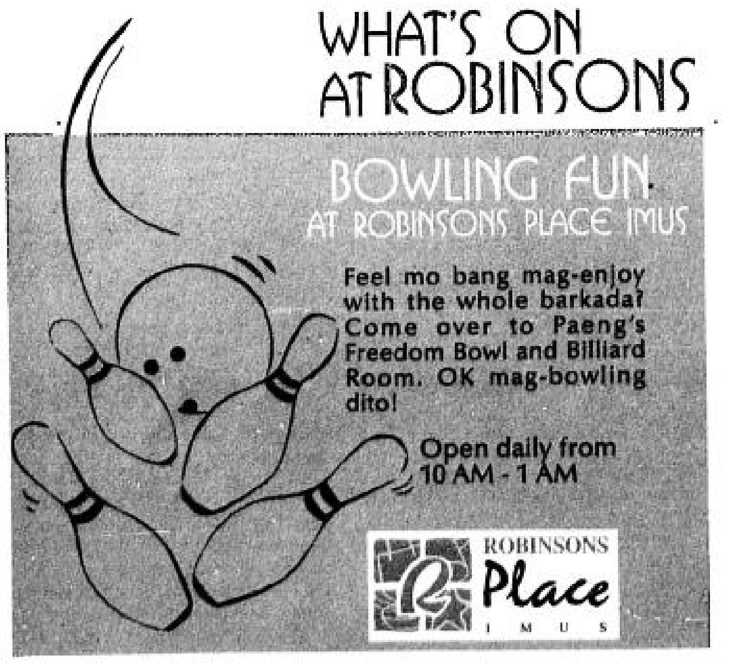

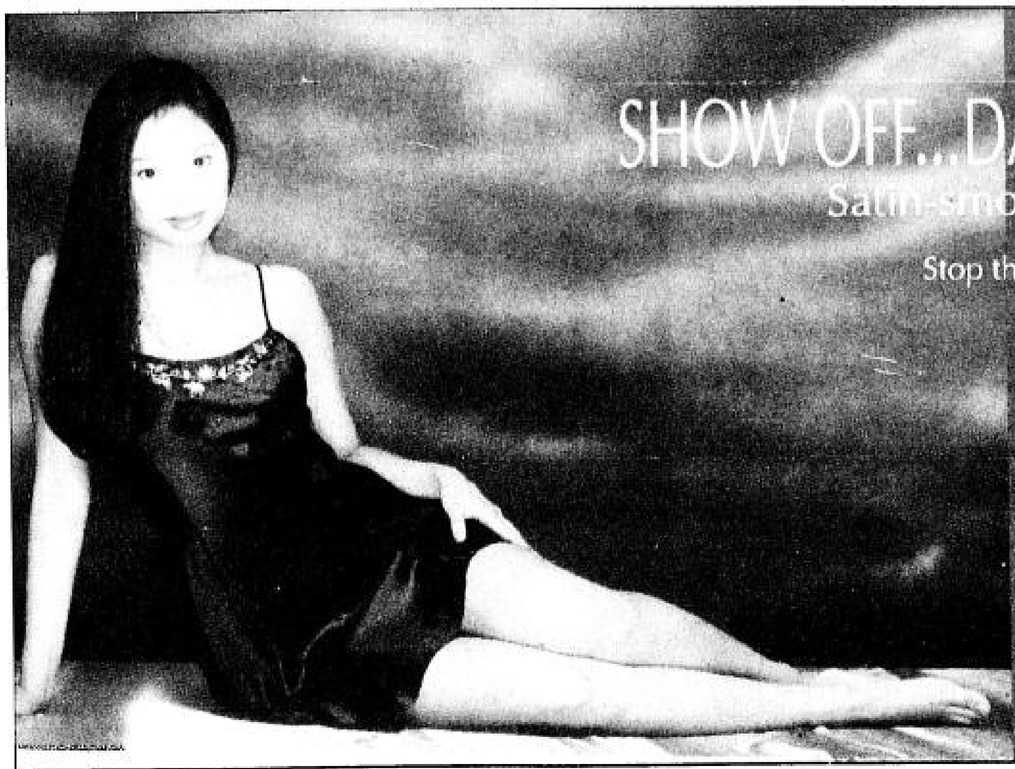

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Gems of Filipino theater

By Walter Ang

THE THEATER scene in 2000 was certainly filled with pomp, big machinery and extensive publicity. There were, however, gems throughout the year whose creativity and charm were easily eclipsed by the noise of bigger productions. We caught several smaller, intimate plays and musicals that didn't enjoy the same amount of hype of the other shows. It's heartening to know that in Philippine theater, big things do come in little packages.

With a lot of debate and discussion surrounding Western themes and stories invading the Philippine stage, the year 2000 certainly didn't start off in that direction. Gilda Cordero-Fernando's "Luna: An Aswang Romance" was an imaginative (and big) production that showcased what the creative Pinoy mind could conjure.

Hodgepodge

Delving into local *engkanto* folklore, this tale of love between a *manananggal* and a mortal is as Filipino as Erap jokes. It brought together a hodgepodge of well-known artists and fashion designers. With close to 60 costume changes, it was described by its makers as "a fashion show masquerading as a play." And what costumes they were, with materials that ranged from abaca to cassette tape ribbon, everything you could think of, except the kitchen sink. With Chin Chin Gutierrez as Luna, creatures of the night had never been this beautiful.

What was most exciting about "Luna" was the coming together of artists from different theater companies in and around the city. Actors from Peta, Repertory Philippines, Tanghalang Pilipino and Gantimpala Theater Foundation interacted onstage, producing such dynamism that was fresh and fun to watch.

The exchange of tale Jidn't end there. Tanghalang pino's John Arcilla guested on Repertory stage as Valentin in , musical "Kiss of the Spider nan." Michael Williams playeo gay cell mate Molina. Wh we weren't able to catch Peta's i-cal drama-comedy "informa " "Tumawag Kay Libby Manaoag," friends gave glowing reviews of the company's efforts in bringing women's issues to the forefront, using theater to make the material accessible, and touring the show to audiences who needed to learn from it the most.

Bankard trilogy

We were also able to catch two productions from Bankard's Trilogy of plays. Kudos, by the way, to Bankcard for making their shows free to students and educators. Shown at the PCIBank Tower Auditorium in Makati, "Diary of Anne Frank" featured a set design patterned after the actual layout of the house where Anne Frank lived. It strived to convey the cramped and claustrophobic living quarters her family had to endure during those hard times.

"TWELFTH Night"

Another play in the series was American playwright A.R. Gurney's "The Dining Room." It had no plot to speak of. Instead it featured six actors essaying more than 20 different characters in 17 completely different vignettes unified only by their setting—the dining room. To watch actors Nieves Campa, Jocelyn de Jesus, Sandy Hammett, Richard Cunanan, Paul Holmes and Bonggoy Manahan change personalities at the snap of a finger so many times within two hours was just incredibly awe-inspiring and fun.

Actors' Actors Inc. also staged a play written by a US-based playwright, but a Filipino one this time. Paul Stephen Lim's "Figures in Clay" had only three characters in a bare acting platform with three chairs. Bon Vibar, Bart Guingona and Paolo Fabregas portrayed the intimate and intertwined relationships of three gay men, each separated from the other with a 20-year age gap.

"LUNA: An Aswang Romance"

"LUNA"

Some companies took on another Western playwright as well, but "indigenized" the material with Asian sensibilities. Shakespeare proved he's always in vogue as the year closed with two of his works in translation by the late Rolando Tinio. "Twelfth Night" and "Macbeth" were staged by Tanghalang Ateneo and Tanghalang Pilipino respectively. Both productions infused Asian settings, costumes, makeup, choreography and stylized movement into these timeless tales of comedy and tragedy, giving them a definite Filipino twist.

The year 2000 was ripe with choices for the Filipino theatergoer. Big Broadway musicals, original Filipino productions, enduring classics and experimental shows. Pomp and circumstance, heart and soul, all dished out with Filipino ingenuity and talent. What will the year 2001 have in store for us? Raise the curtains and start the show!

Play that music again, Sam

By Pablo A. Tariman

MY choices for conductors of the year are Jun Fujimoto from Japan who led the Peace Philharmonic of the Philippines in Cebu in the rendering of Dvorak's Symphony No. 8, and Christoph Poppen for leading the Manila Youth Symphony Orchestra in the superb reading of Mahler's The "Titan." Fujimoto also proved an excellent accompanist when he teamed up with pianist Ingrid Salas Santamaria in the A Minor Grieg Concerto.

In the last PPO season, the violin soloists of the year are Eliza Quirit (in the Bruch concerto) under her father, Julian Quirit, and Oscar Yatco (in the Beethoven D Major Concerto) under Francisco Feliciano. These two are generations away from each other, but they have one thing in common: uncommon musical instinct with true discipline to boot.

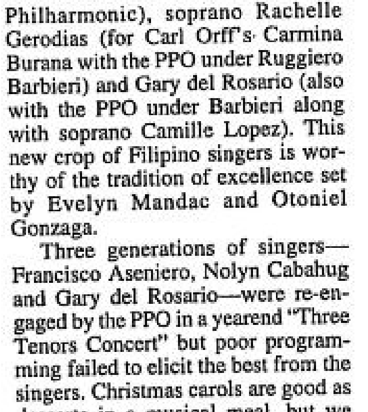
Other unusual soloists of the year are the Padilla twins from Cebu, Duane and Daniel, who figured in the Bach and Vivaldi Concertos for Two Violins with the then Cebu Youth Symphony Orchestra. You see double when you see these soloists, but they turned out to be a highly synchronized ensemble playing Bach and Vivaldi favorites.

Among the singers, my soloists of the year are Jonathan Zaens (for Mozart's Madamina with the Manila Philharmonic under Rodel Colmenar), soprano Andion Fernandez (for Mozart's Come scollo with the Manila Philharmonic), soprano Rachelle Gerodias (for Carl Orff's Carmina Burana with the PPO under Ruggiero Barbieri) and Gary del Rosario (also with the PPO under Barbieri along with soprano Camille Lopez). This new crop of Filipino singers is worthy of the tradition of excellence set by Evelyn Mandac and Otoniel Gonzaga.

Three generations of singers—Francisco Aseniero, Nolyn Cabahug and Gary del Rosario—were re-engaged by the PPO in a yearend "Three Tenors Concert" but poor programming failed to elicit the best from the singers. Christmas carols are good as desserts in a musical meal, but we had expected main courses for tenors.

Mozart's "Don Giovanni" made an inauspicious return to the CCP courtesy of the Opera Guild of the Philippines, but it didn't convert new opera fans; it sent seasoned operagoers fleeing during the intermission and the most determined ones weeping at the end of the last note of the opera. The sets didn't inspire nor did the singers. Someone suggested that since there was no budget for sets, the entire opera should have been deconstructed with Malacañang as the setting and with an honest-to-goodness Don Juan counting his true-to-life conquests in the aria "Madamina."

RUSSIAN violinist Anastasia Chebotareva (center) is flanked by Bishop Sergio Utleg and Fr. Rudy Vidad after a well-received performance in Santiago City, Isabela. PHOTOS BY VILLAMOR VISAYA JR., PDI NORTHERN LUZON


PIANIST J. Greg Zuniega signs autographs from newfound music fans in Santiago City.

In terms of publicity and broadcast exposure, pop singer Martin Nievera became PPO's soloist of the year, thanks to ABS-CBN, which kept the CCP box office ringing until curtain time.

Pianist Felipe Ramirez played the Liszt's First Concerto with the PPO, but didn't make anything fresh out of this hard-beaten warhorse and the piece remained what it was—a show-off concerto.

Pianists Raul Sunico and Della Besa did their best in Mendelssohn's Concerto for Two Pianos, but the presence of Carlf Orff's Carmina Burana at the end of the program literally wiped them off the night's repertoire. What stood out was Jonathan Velasco's Philippine Chamber Choir with Rachelle Gerodias as soloist. Talk of unfair programming.

My choices of Recitalists of the Year:

Romanian violinist Alexander Tomescu with Mary Anne Espina at the Francisco Santiago Hall in Makati and in Virac, Catanduanes. Formidable technique and consummate artistry certainly made Tomescu a worthy recipient of the Sir Yehudi Menuhin Prize in Paris.

Cellist Angela Lee with pianist J. Greg Zuniega at the St. Stephen's Concert Hall in Manila and at the Hotel Roman's Ville in Ilagan, Isabela. Total rapport with her pianist and a way with Beethoven and Shostakovich make this lady cellist stand out. Her musicality was so overwhelming she converted more music lovers to the art of the cello and kept them asking for more.

Bass baritone Jonathan Zaens with pianist Mark Carpio at the CCP Little Theater. This Germany-based singer was the saving grace of the CCP Filipino Artists Series and proved to one and all that power isn't everything in the art of singing. His exquisite vocal artistry could be summed up in one entry that night, Strauss "Traum Durch Die Dammerung (Dream in a Twilight)," which rendered everyone speechless and in awe of the singer.

After his stint with the PPO, Del Rosario returned to Manila in August and with pianist Nita Ablogar-Quinto performed in a stunning recital in Ilagan, Isabela and Cebu.

In his hands, Verdi and Puccini had found a safe niche and music lovers of Isabela and Cebu reciprocated with one standing ovation after another.

At year's end with the impeachment trial hugging the limelight, Russian violinist Anastasia Chebotareva with pianist J. Greg Zuniega braved the country's volatile political landscape and played Mozart, Wienawsky and Massenet in Manila and Isabela. In Santiago City, people in nearby San Isidro town—led by their parish priest Fr. Gerald Vidad—trooped to Carig Plaza Hotel to watch their first violin recital and were in awe of the beauty and musicality of the Russian artist. A surprise encore was Ilagan Bishop Sergio Utleg playing Romero-Zubiri's "Matud Nila" with La Chebotareva. Pandemonium ensued.

The same standing ovation was repeated at the Hotel Roman's Ville in Ilagan town the following night where for an hour, the Russian violinist allowed audiences to enjoy music at the height of the damaging Clarissa Ocampo testimony.

The opening and closing concerts of the First Cagayan Valley International Music Festival both were capped by standing ovations, which proved that classical had long been missed and cherished in this part of Northern Luzon.

Here and there

NOW that pianist Ariel Dechosa got two standing ovations for his solo recitals in Manila and Cebu, now is the chance to see him work with an orchestra when he debuts with the Philippine Philharmonic today, under the baton of Chino Toledo. The concerto: Beethoven No. 5 known as "The Emperor." Cellist Willie Pasamba is soloist in Lalo's cello concert on Jan. 29 at the CCP Little Theater with former Spanish Ambassador Delfín Colomé conducting the Philippine Philharmonic.

* * *

Congratulations to film scorer Nonong Buencamino for winning the Best Music award (for "Tanging Yaman") in the last film festival. Earlier, he won the same award for "Rizal" and "Muro-Ami," and I suppose his work in "Sa Pusod ng Dagat" is worthy of the same citation. Indeed, it takes a real musician to do justice to films of consequence.

A prayer for the peace and unity of our country

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

AS I write this column, People Power 2 is being launched at Edsa after Mass was said early in the morning of Jan. 17. This prayer to Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of Ubanon, patroness of Catbalogan, Samar comes at an opportune time when the country is being divided by anger and hatred.

Written by Bishop Maximiano T. Cruz, Rector of the shrine, it is a personal prayer for ourselves and for our country. The prayer also asks Our Lady as Queen of Peace to help us forgive so we can have peace. Whatever is your intention, please include a prayer for our country, so God will help us overcome this difficult time of our history.

Our Lady of Ubanon

I WROTE about Our Lady of Ubanon for the first time on Jan. 9 when Bishop Cruz told me about her and when Our Lady helped me with some problem. The image has been in the chapel inside the former Catholic cemetery since time immemorial.

In a history of Pet Labro, it is said that the image was crafted by a Chinese artisan upon orders of a Jesuit in the mid-18th century using the *hamorawon* trunk which was also used to sculpt the image of St. James the Apostle. The second version is that the image was carved after the image of St. Bartholomew was made.

OUR Lady of the Holy Rosary of Ubanon

Hidden devotion

Except, perhaps, for devotees from Samar and parts of the Visayas, the devotion to Our Lady of Ubanon is unknown. Perhaps, it was meant to write about her, so she would be known. I am guided to have an *estampita* made of the Virgin under this title in full color and with the prayer at the back. Those who want to help in the printing of the *estampita* can beep me at Easy Call 141-020543. Please enclose a self-stamped addressed envelope, if you want a free copy. In a future column, I will write about her miracles after my visit to Catbalogan at the end of the month.

Prayer

O Blessed Virgin of Ubanon, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, it was through you that the Son of God, Whom to become our Redeemer and our true hope for everlasting life.

Look down upon me, I earnestly pray, and listen to my appeal as I devoutly approach you with full trust and confidence in your maternal compassion and merciful love.

Intercede for me efficaciously before your Divine Son, Jesus Christ, the Fountain of life and holiness, that I be granted this humble petition of mine... (mention the favor or request).

O Virgin Spouse of the Holy Spirit, I joyously acclaim you as Refuse of sinners, Health of the sick, Mother of the Church and Queen of peace.

Grant me, finally, the grace to emulate your total submission to the Will of God the father in all things, and teach me to thank Him forever for having entrusted me to your care as my solicitous Mother, to whose Immaculate Heart I do filially consecrate my entire self until my dying breath. Amen.

—By the Most Rev. Maximiano T. Cruz, D.D., S.T.D., Bishop Emerites of Calbayog (With Ecclesiastical Approval)

Our Lady of Manaoag in Cebu

REV. Fr. Trinidad Silva, parish priest of St. Francis of Assisi Church in Naga, 40 km south of Cebu City, had long envisioned a fitting finale of the Jubilee Year's enthronements of Our Lady of Manaoag.

After different groups of carollers sang Christmas songs setting further the season's mood for the first Misa de Aguinaldo, a 5-ft image of Our Lady of Manaoag was carried along the gold leafed entrance to the altar by barong-clad gentlemen amid solemn Ave Marias and thunderous clapping that echoed far and wide.

Rev. Fr. James C. Alamillo, O.P., former parish priest of the Holy Rosary Shrine of Manaoag Pangasinan, celebrated Mass, gave an inspiring homily, and did the enthronement.

Laundrywoman needs operation

DESPITE the crisis, I am sure there are still kind readers out there who would help a laundrywoman in Cullion, Palawan undergo an operation costing P20,000. The mother of Miguel Gatchalian whom readers have been helping go to school bleeds if she sits too long. She has almoranas that needs to be removed. She cannot work anymore. Please help me send money to her, so she can be operated soon. Ms Gatchalian is a widow who strived to send her children to school by washing clothes. Now, she cannot do it anymore. Please beep me at Easy Call 141-020543, if you want to help.

St. Anthony de Padua Parish needs help

THANKS to some readers who sent money to St. Anthony de Padua Parish in Rosales, Pangasinan, the roof has been installed.

Juanita Sandoval, president of the pastoral council, called to say "thank you." More help is needed, however. Please write her c/o St. Anthony de Padua Parish, Rosales, Pangasinan or the parish priest Fr. Dimas Jacinto.

Fr. Stan Soria's book

THE BOOK "And God said: Gayud Lagi" has been available for sale since December 1999, but it is only now that I could write about it. The sale of this book would help in the construction of the Epiphany of the Lord Church. To order, please write the author Fr. Stan Soria c/o the Epiphany of the Lord Parish on Camarin Road, San Isidro, Kiko, Camarin II, Kalookan City. More on this book in a future column.

Albert Seeland's 40th day

HYATT Hotel management will hold a Mass and get-together for the 40th day of Albert Seeland on Feb. 2, 4 p.m. at the Hasmin Room. Friends and relatives are invited.

Reliv seminar

RELIV (which means return to health in French) will hold a seminar on wellness at the AIM on Jan. 27, 1 p.m. Admission is free. Please call Ruth Lim at tel. 872-0162 for detail or Relio office at tel. 810-5970.

Pinay soprano in San Francisco Christmas rites

FILIPINA dramatic soprano Elsa M. Garcia sang last Christmas Day at the St. Anthony's Church on Cesar Chavez Street in San Francisco, California, US.

Garcia sang musical compositions by Prof. Laura Reyes with lyrics by freelance journalist Marie Pruden: "Christmas Prayer of St. Francis," "Araw sa Pagsilang Mo" and "Prelude to the Silent Night." Reyes accompanied her on the piano.

Garcia was named Most Outstanding Asian-American in California in 1991. A degree holder in social work at the Centro Escolar University in Manila, she is now with the Department of Human Services in the City County of San Francisco.

She is the wife of Max S. Garcia Jr., the 1959 top graduate (cum laude) in mechanical engineering at the Feati University, and named video and photojournalist of the year in 1993 and in 1994 by the Filipino Media USA.

Reyes, a graduate from the UP with degrees in music and in education, was awarded years back the Most Distinguished Daughter of Las Piñas in the Field of Music by the Kapisanan Bantay Asinan. She was district music and arts coordinator of Las Piñas Public Schools.

Sinulog mixes politics and religion

(From page E1)

Everyone is familiar with the story: how Magellan gifted Queen Juana of Cebu with a statue of the Child Jesus when she was baptized a Catholic, how the statue was enshrined in a church, how after a fire that razed the church the statue was found unscathed, albeit blackened by soot.

Cebuanos consider this a singular miracle, and from thenceforth they venerated the icon with unbelievable zeal. Some fun-loving Cebuanos 20 years ago cooked up some street-dancing hoopla on Colon, said to be the oldest street in Cebu, if not the entire country. They called it "Sinulog," after the Bisaya word for "celebration." The word also denotes the movement and rhythm of bare feet used in the street dancing.

The hoopla got Cebuanos hooked, and the Sinulog became a yearly occasion for revelry during the feast of the Sto. Niño—on the third Sunday of January.

This year, the Sinulog took on an extraordinarily festive tone as Cebuanos wore black in solidarity with the anti-Erap protest movement. The place to go to was the rotunda on Fuente Osmeña, which drew in an endless stream of rallyists even as cars passing by honked the Erap Resign honk. Text messages had everyone on tenterhooks, amused, angry and amazed at the sheer banality of it all.

Nonstop party

At the traditional fluvial parade on Saturday morning, which passed through the channel separating Cebu and Mactan islands, one vessel gaily decorated with buntings and balloons flouted a streamer which carried the Sto. Niño greeting, "Pit Señor!," in tandem with "Erap Resign!" Talk about church and state relations.

A funny sidelight: a dinghy carrying the Emergency Rescue Unit Force—with its initials emblazoned on the side—tickled bystanders at the pier, who screamed merrily, "ERUF resign!"

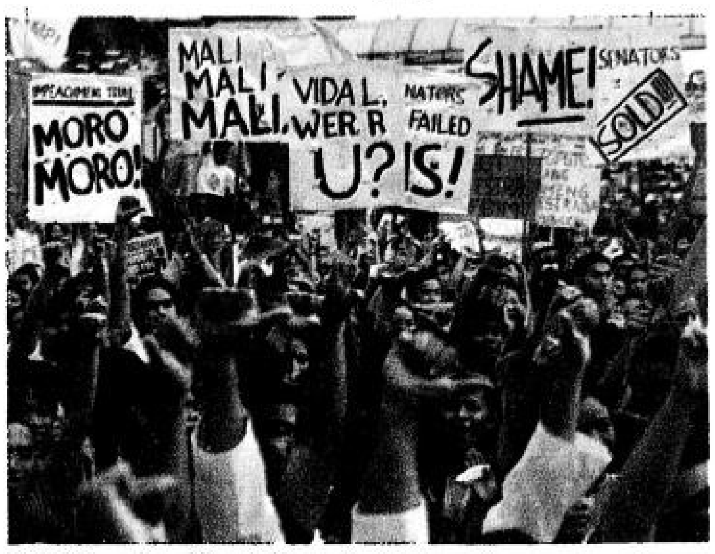
When Malacañang was vacated and a new government sworn into office, the Sinulog festivities became one grand celebration of people power. And if you don't know it yet, Cebuanos know how to party!

There was the nonstop street fever on Fuente Osmeña, the stream of devotees during the Sto. Niño procession at the city's old walkways on Saturday afternoon and the prayers of thanksgiving at the neighboring sanctums of the Sto. Niño Basilica and the Cebu Cathedral.

By nightfall, it was partytime. Everyone trooped to The Village, the new hub of bars and bistros within the Cebu Civic and Trade Center. It boasted such tony must-visits as Club Fuel, Soap and Yo! Latino—all three very Malate, very dress-down hot and hip.

The partying peaked on Sunday afternoon, the main Sinulog parade. Street dancing contingents from all over the country had us giddy with all the pomp and pageantry. By this time, politics gave way to spiritual high—as all of Cebu venerated the Sto. Niño on the streets of the country's oldest city.

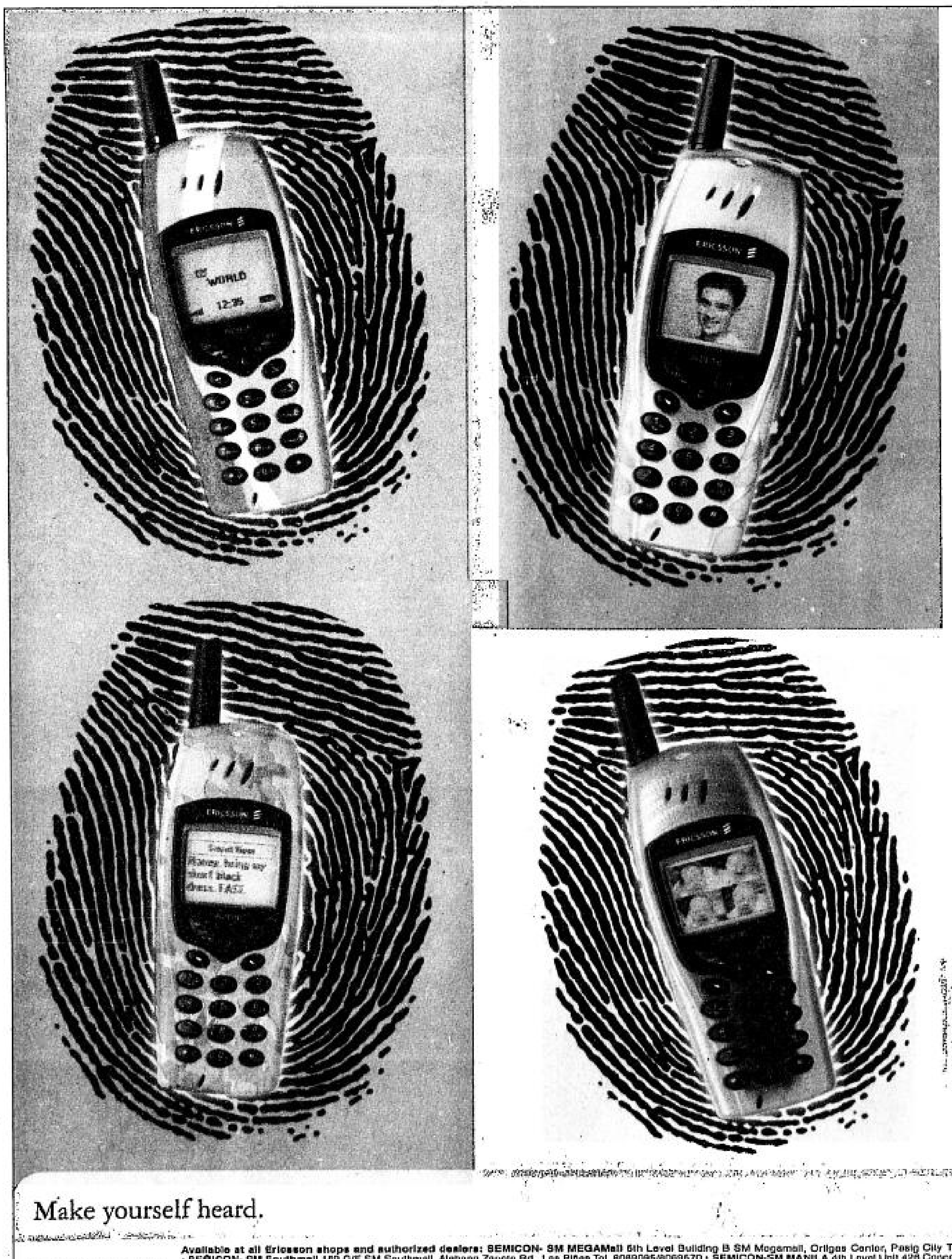
This intermingling of politics and religion indeed made for a powerful blast, and this Cebuanos acknowledged as they partied all weekend.


MORO MORO!
MALI MALI MALI
VIDAL WER R U?
NATORS FAILED IS!
SHAME!
SENATORS
SOLD!

CEBU'S version of People Power 2

CITY Central School wins best costume and second place in Elementary Category.

DON Carlos Gothong High School bags most colorful costume award and third place in the High School Category.



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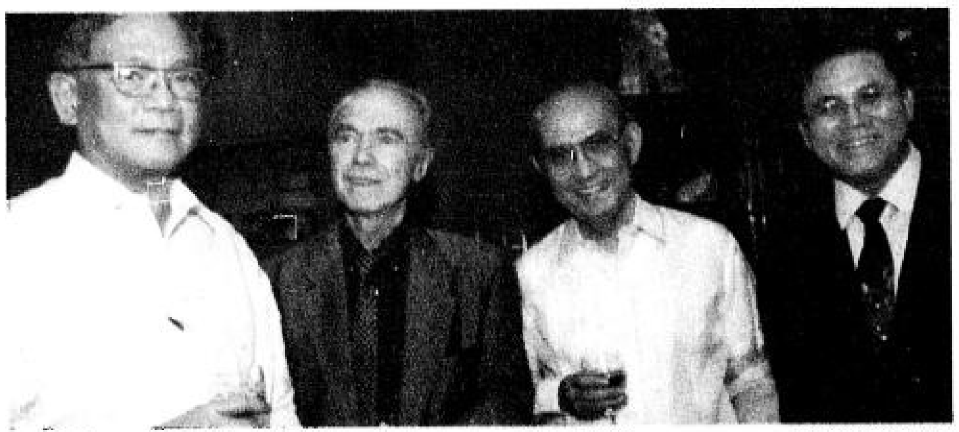

JAIME Laya, Juvenal Sansó, Fr. Joaquin Bernas and Bal Endriga

PHOTOS: LYN RILLON

CEZ Manalo, Lulu Castañeda and Meldy Cojuangco

AMAYA Michel, Thelma Gana and Karen Macasaet

Well-loved tunes and Iberian cuisine in hopeful season

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

Amiga

DESPITE THE GLOOM and doom, last Christmas was still a time to get together and celebrate friendships. **Lulu Castañeda** held an intimate dinner for her former professor, mentor and friend, Fr. **Joaquin Bernas,** to help him out with his fund-raising for the Ateneo Law School. So listen, all you Ateneans out there, the Philippines needs a good law school where future lawyers will receive instructions so that in cases of impeachment, the public can understand what the prosecutors and defense counsels are saying. Of course, I'm only joking, but Father Bernas needs half a million. Calling **Chavit**…

Because she had suddenly lost her voice, Lulu had hoped for a miracle. Apparently, her prayer worked because she was able to entertain her guests, even grandly singing her parent's favorite tunes such as "Indian Love Call" and "The Desert Song" in a duet with pilot-tenor **Samuel Baclao** (he came in early that morning from Saudi Arabia). Enjoying the sumptuous dinner prepared by young chef **Paul Poblador** (he studied and trained abroad) were **Juvy Sansó,** on his annual pilgrimage home, **P.L. Lim** and his lovely **Madeline, Thelma Gana, Mike** and **Alice Guerrero, Paeng** and **Melly Hechanova,** who was festive in Christmas red with rubies, **Tereret** and **Andy Liboro** and **Meldy Cojuanco.** Also there was **Amaya Michel,** who was set to leave the country with her husband, Mexican Ambassador **Enrique Michel,** who was taking over the post of protocol officer to Mexico's new president.

* * *

HOTEL Inter-Continental recently launched La Noche Loca, a weekly Latin poolside fiesta. Spanish chef **Carlos Huertas** was flown in by Inter-Con's GM **Michael Herrmann,** German by birth but Latino in spirit, to concoct authentic Hispanic cuisine like churrasco, skewered slabs of lamb, beef, wild boar with pork sausages and prawns barbecued over a charcoal grill, Mexican tacos and chimichangga selections.

There was a plexiglass see-through dance floor built over the swimming pool with two submerged fountains emitting jet streams of water from below. Michael and **Belinda Herrmann** started the ball rolling by dancing to the beat of Onda Latina Band led by singer **Mai Castro**. **Becky Garcia** soon followed suit with Russian Ballroom Dance Champion **Mikhael Diruon,** who also danced a mean samba with **Michaela Fenix** and **Maritess Alava.** Seen in the dancing crowd were **Baby Orosa, Jenny Pena,** Inter-Con PR manager; **Larry Leviste, Nini Licaros** and **Jay Tambunting.**

RAMON Orlina, Lay Anna Orlina, Mark Radford and Lulu Castañeda

TESSIE Choa, Cez Manalo, Lara Malabanan and Norie Ongsiako

BABY Orosa, Jake Macasaet, Albert Zenaros and P.L. Lim

PAENG Hechanova, Teresita Liboro, Melly Hechanova and Andres Liboro

SINGING pilot Samuel Velasco Baclao and his pianist wife Mary Ann Moronilla Baclao

ED Malabanan

RALION Alonzo "livin'la vida loca" with a member of the Onda Latina Band.

RUSSIAN ballroom dance star Mikhael Diruon leads former model Maritess Alava to the dance floor.

INTER-CON general manager Michael Herrmann, wife Belinda and daughter Natalie (fifth, seventh and first from left, respectively) entertain guests from local Latin American community namely (l-r): Donzalo Aguirregomezcorta, Jose and Lola Torres, Derek Gibson, Mercedes and Mercado Carballo de Alonso.

BALLROOM dancing queen Becky Garcia with Herrmann, Hotel Inter-Continental Manila GM, at La Noche Loca's launching party

TV network leader receives another honor

MENARDO R. Jimenez, who retired from GMA Network last December as president/CEO, was honored recently by the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) with a doctorate degree in Mass Communications.

The honorary degree was conferred upon Jimenez on Nov. 24, 2000, another milestone in an extraordinary life that has changed the landscape of Philippine broadcasting forever. The doctorate degree is the third to be conferred upon Jimenez, following a Humanities doctorate given by Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in 1995 and a Business Management doctorate from the University of Pangasinan in 1994.

PUP president Dr. Ofelia Carague said PUP decided to confer upon Jimenez the honor for his efforts in building GMA Network from a small black-and-white station to a giant in Philippine media. The honor caps Jimenez's successful broadcasting career by setting a strong foundation for GMA as it moves into the 21st century.

It was under Jimenez's leadership that GMA figured in the highly coveted Far Eastern Economic Review's top 200 most admired companies in Asia and one of the top 10 most admired companies in the Philippines. Jimenez was also able to build the GMA Network Center, a digital facility that will serve as the network's home in the 21st century.

Dr. Carague and PUP's officers said Jimenez deserved the honor for leading a third-rate TV station through martial law, rebellions, coup d'etats, political and economic crises, and building it into a respectable multibillion-peso media conglomerate today.

DR. Mona Valisno of the Commission on Higher Education (right) and a PUP official (left) confer the honorary doctorate on Menardo R. Jimenez.

Revolutionary chic

TEESAW

Raul Teehankee

THE RESTAURANT row at Power Plant in Rockwell has been making waves. And among the chic bars and cafés in this place, the biggest hit is Che, named after the revolutionary Cuban hero. "Cojibas" and other international brands attract cigar aficionados as well as guests who crave for excellent food, an extensive drink list and a modern yet minimalist design.

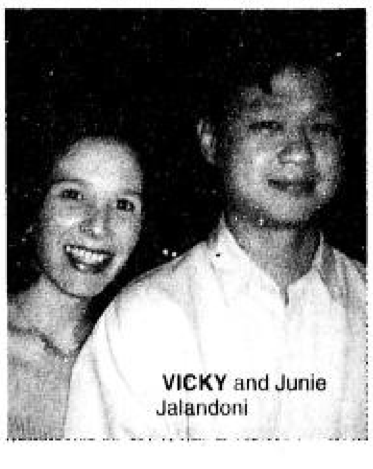
Owners **Bobby Benares, Jojo Caro** and twins **Tommy** and **Yoohoo Villanueva** are fabulous hosts who make sure that patrons always get the best service in town. The café's spacious al fresco area of Che gives it more edge. The ambiance reflects South Beach in Miami, Florida.

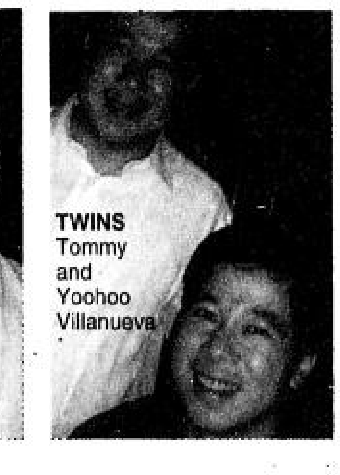
GAELLE Branellec

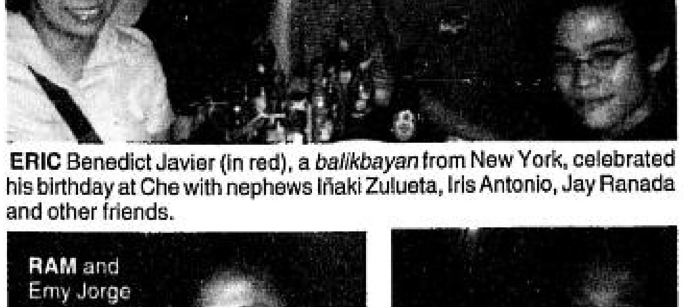
SISTERS Lian Bautista and Mia Villanueva

CLAUDINE Trillo

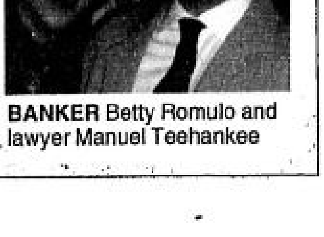
FRITZ Holsz and Juan Miguel Ongpin


VICKY and Junie Jalandoni


TWINS Tommy and Yoohoo Villanueva


ERIC Benedict Javier (in red), a *balikbayan* from New York, celebrated his birthday at Che with nephews Iñaki Zulueta, Iris Antonio, Jay Ranada and other friends.

RAM and Emy Jorge


BANKER Betty Romulo and lawyer Manuel Teehankee

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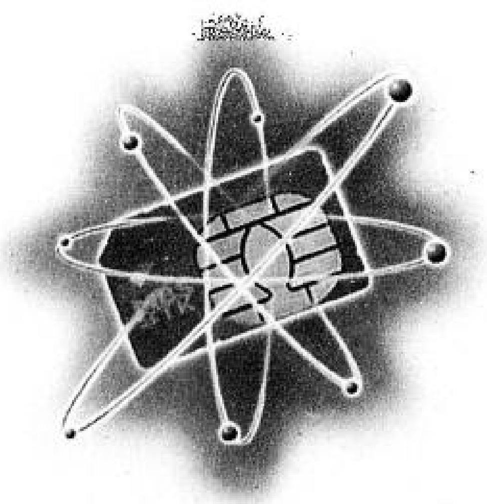

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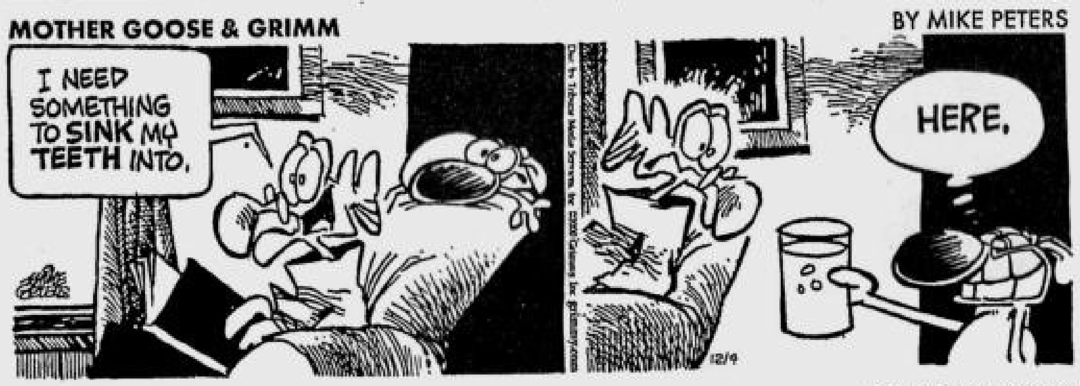
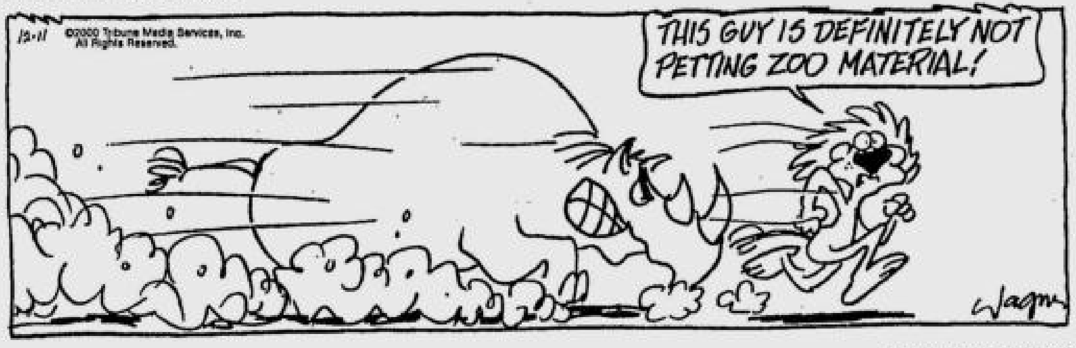
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


I NEED SOMETHING TO SINK MY TEETH INTO.
HERE.
12/4

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


12-11
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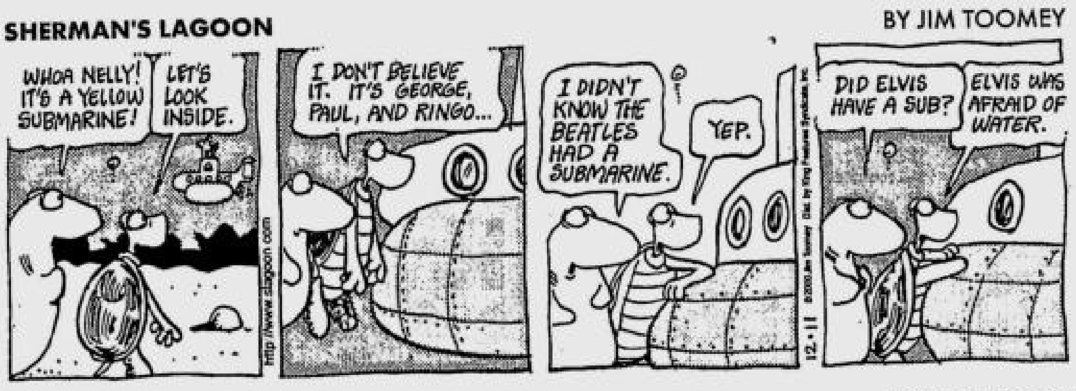
THIS GUY IS DEFINITELY NOT PETTING ZOO MATERIAL!
Wagner

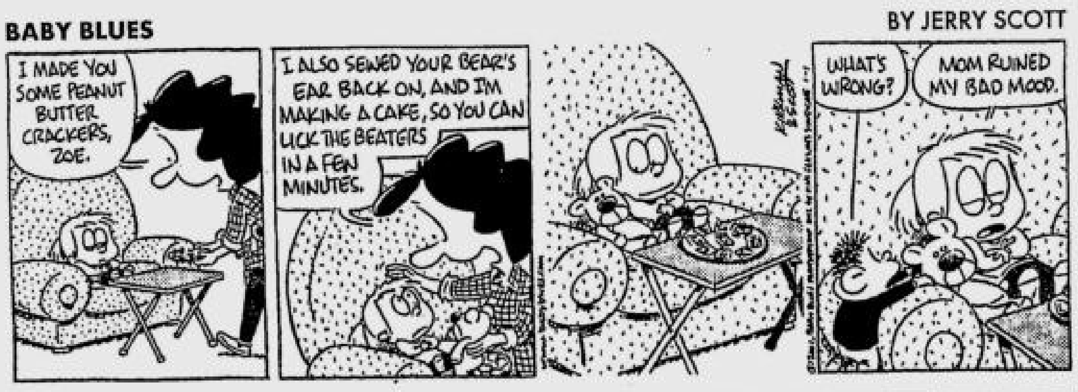
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WHOA NELLY! IT'S A YELLOW SUBMARINE!
LET'S LOOK INSIDE.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT. IT'S GEORGE, PAUL, AND RINGO...
I DIDN'T KNOW THE BEATLES HAD A SUBMARINE.
YEP.
DID ELVIS HAVE A SUB?
ELVIS WAS AFRAID OF WATER.
http://www.slagoon.com
12-11

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I MADE YOU SOME PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS, ZOE.
I ALSO SEWED YOUR BEAR'S EAR BACK ON, AND I'M MAKING A CAKE, SO YOU CAN LICK THE BEATERS IN A FEW MINUTES.
WHAT'S WRONG?
MOM RUINED MY BAD MOOD.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Steve Perry, Linda Blair, John Hurt, Bill Bixby, Sam Cooke, Olivia D'Abo, Diane Lane

Happy Birthday: You're a real go-getter, eager to tread where others fear to go. You will have no problem standing up for your beliefs this year. Your competitive nature will help you determine the best way to reach your goals. You will be lucky in love as long as you're honest regarding your feelings. Clear your head before you promise too much to too many. Spreading yourself too thin will be your downfall. Your numbers: 6, 14, 22, 26, 33, 40

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Get into self-improvement projects that will take your mind off your troubles. Necessary changes in your home environment may not be welcome, but they will be favorable in the long run.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Someone you least expect may try to lead you in the wrong direction. Investment opportunities will be favorable as long as you go it alone and don't partake in joint ventures.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Rest and relaxation will be necessary. Watch your diet and your tendency to overindulge. Don't break promises that you made to children, or difficulties will surely erupt.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will be ready to argue with anyone and everyone. Someone you care about may not be completely honest with you. Control your temper if you wish to avoid separation.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your reputation may be affected if you get involved in secret love affairs. There is a good chance that someone is just toying with your emotions. Don't wear your heart on your sleeve.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't be too demanding or negative with youngsters. You tend to want the best for everyone you love. Your desires may lead to isolation or retaliation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Direct your mind to areas that will bring you closer to advancement. Greater self-esteem will result from your accomplishments. Don't waste your time trying to deal with erratic individuals.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Pursue competitive outdoor activities that will be sure to bring you the stimulation you require. You will be able to motivate others in a positive manner that will bring favorable results.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Stay away from those risky financial ventures that you find so tempting. Don't make major decisions too quickly. Your need to exaggerate will get you into trouble.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can expect those you live with to have their own ideas about how they want things done around the house. Don't argue; just work in your own space and avoid getting into heated debates.

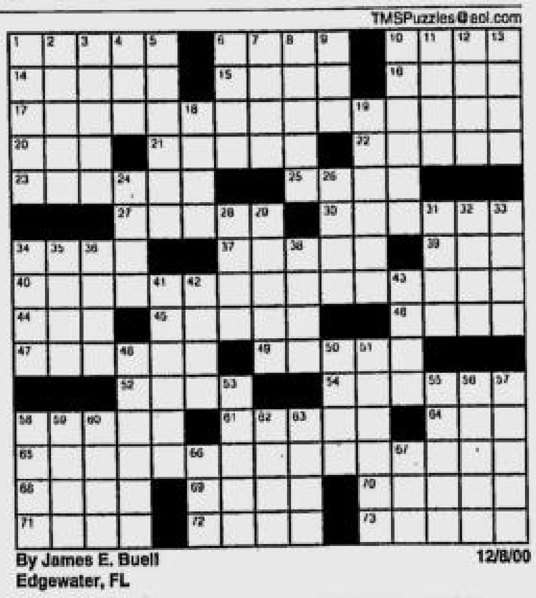
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't make statements unless you have all the pertinent information on hand. You may be questioned and made to look foolish if you haven't done your research.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't let your temper get out of hand. Someone may try to draw you into an argument. Use your compassionate manner to ease the tension and turn the situation around.

Birthday Baby: You have the drive and the determination to make something of yourself and your life. You are bright, intuitive, compassionate and sometimes set in your ways.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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58 59 60 61 62 63 64
65 66 67
68 69 70
71 72 73

By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL

12/8/00

ACROSS
1 Off-the-cuff comment
6 Church area
10 Belly problem
14 Lane or Keaton
15 Mariana island
16 Earsplitting
17 Let us forge ahead!
20 Stiller or Vereen
21 Trunk artery
22 Leniently
23 Bad imitation
25 Waiter's aid
27 Philippines island
30 In a class by __
34 Fit
37 Give feedback
39 __ Grande
40 Have high hopes
44 Dog tags, e.g.
45 Sound
46 Money __ everything!
47 Toward the tail-end
49 Glowing coal
52 Genres
54 Applications
58 Snapshot
61 Armed robbery
64 In the manner of
65 Landon TV series
68 Run in neutral
69 Robert __ Warren
70 Kick out
71 Lascivious look
72 Historic periods
73 Marine ray

DOWN
1 Sun-dried brick
2 Greasy spoon
3 Cut grasses
4 Balin or Claire
5 Reprimand
6 Gelling agent
7 Football kick
8 Nasser successor
9 Cassowary's cousin
10 Forever
11 Sweet-talk
12 Catapult
13 Circular current
18 Half asleep
19 Nebraska river
24 Kim Basinger's Baldwin
26 Loaded
28 Stepped on
29 Mysterious
31 Love god
32 MGM mascot
33 Typeface
34 La Scala highlight
35 Night spots?
36 End of the line
38 Molecule component
41 "Hell's Angels" star
42 Depressed mood
43 Oscar-winner Sorvino
48 One or the other
50 "Everything Zen" group
51 Look up to
53 Less outgoing
55 Rossdale of 50D
56 Choose
57 __ Fe, NM
58 Collins or Hartman
59 Sweep under the rug
60 Eye flirtatiously
62 Volcano near Messina
63 Charged particles
66 Imitator
67 Gardner of "The Barefoot Contessa"

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

C	U	B	E	■	C	L	A	R	A	■	D	A	T	A
O	R	A	L	■	L	O	C	A	L	■	E	W	E	S
I	G	N	I	T	E	D	T	H	E	S	P	A	R	K
L	E	D	■	E	R	G	S	■	■	P	O	S	S	E
■	■	■	S	A	G	E	■	S	W	I	S	H	E	D
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A	R	I	A	■	■	A	T	R	I	A	■	E	M	U
F	A	N	N	E	D	T	H	E	F	L	A	M	E	S
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H	E	W	S	■	S	U	E	R	S	■	W	H	O	A

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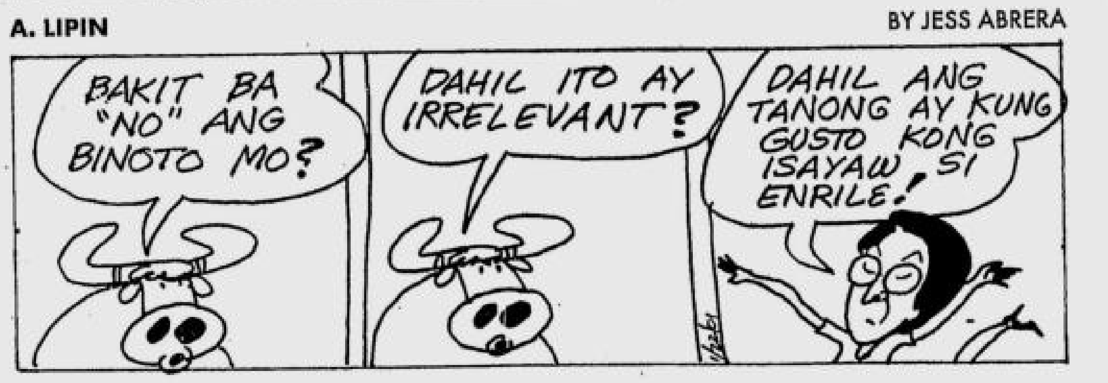
12/8/00

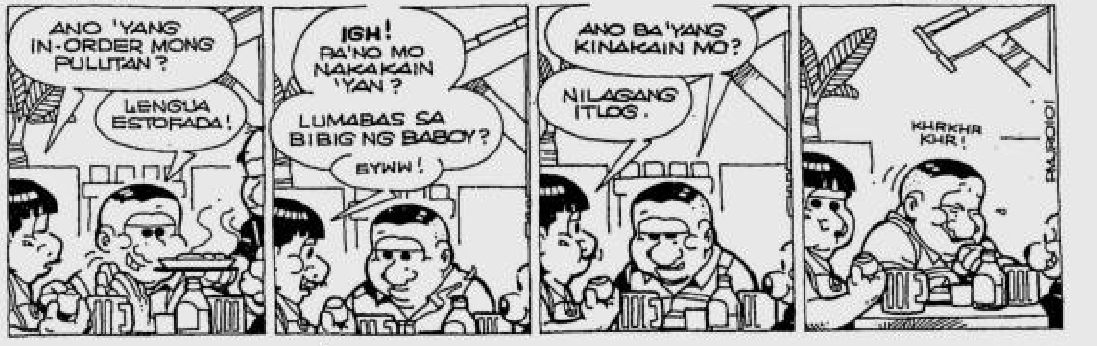
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BAKIT BA "NO" ANG BINOTO MO?
DAHIL ITO AY IRRELEVANT?
DAHIL ANG TANONG AY KUNG GUSTO KONG ISAYAW SI ENRILE!

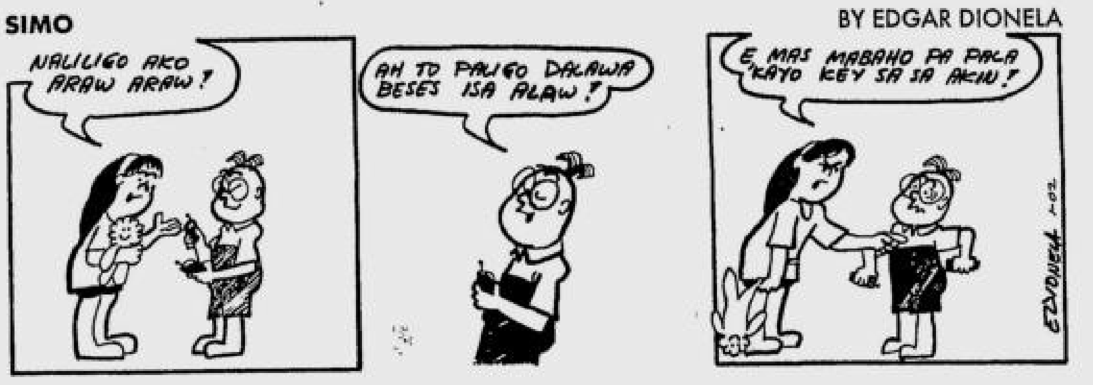
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO 'YANG IN-ORDER MONG PULUTAN?
LENGUA ESTOFADA!
IGH! PA'NO MO NAKAKAIN 'YAN?
LUMABAS SA BIBIG NG BABOY?
BYWW!
ANO BA'YANG KINAKAIN MO?
NILAGANG ITLOG.
KHRKHR KHR!
PMJR2001

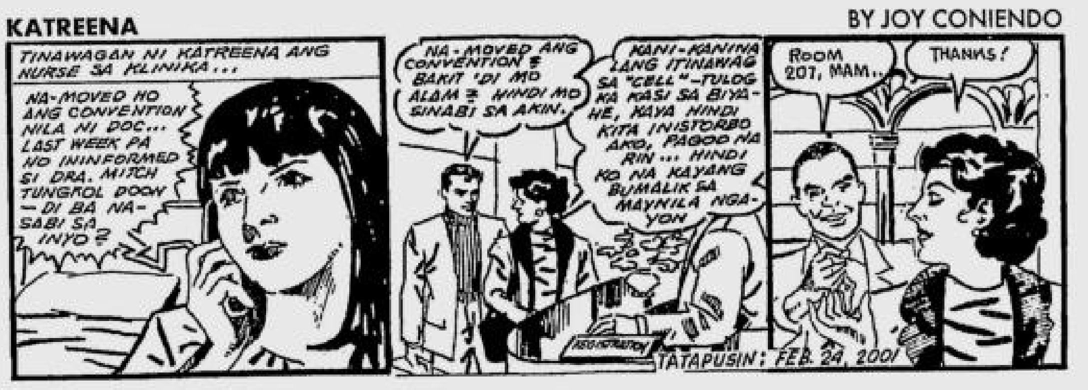
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


NALILIGO AKO ARAW ARAW!
AH TO PALIGO DALAWA BESES ISA ALAW!
E, MAS MABAHO PA PALA KAYO KEY SA SA AKIN!
EDIONELA

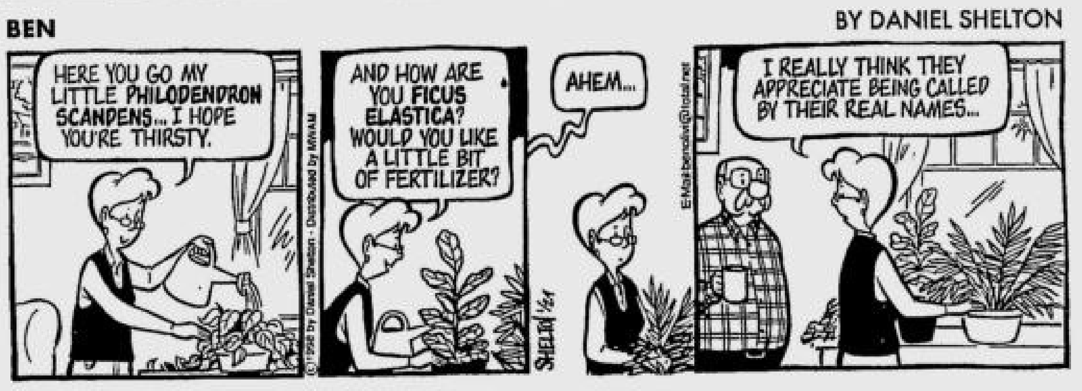
KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


TINAWAGAN NI KATREENA ANG NURSE SA KLINIKA...
NA-MOVED HO ANG CONVENTION NILA NI DOC... LAST WEEK PA HO ININFORMED SI DRA. MITCH TUNGKOL DOON — DI BA NA-SABI SA INYO?
NA-MOVED ANG CONVENTION? BAKIT 'DI MO ALAM? HINDI MO SINABI SA AKIN.
KANI-KANINA LANG ITINAWAG SA "CELL" — TULOG KA KASI SA BIYAHE, KAYA HINDI KITA INISTORBO AKO, PAGOD NA RIN... HINDI KO NA KAYANG BUMALIK SA MAYNILA NGAYON
REGISTRATION
ROOM 207, MAM...
THANKS!
TATAPUSIN: FEB. 24, 2001

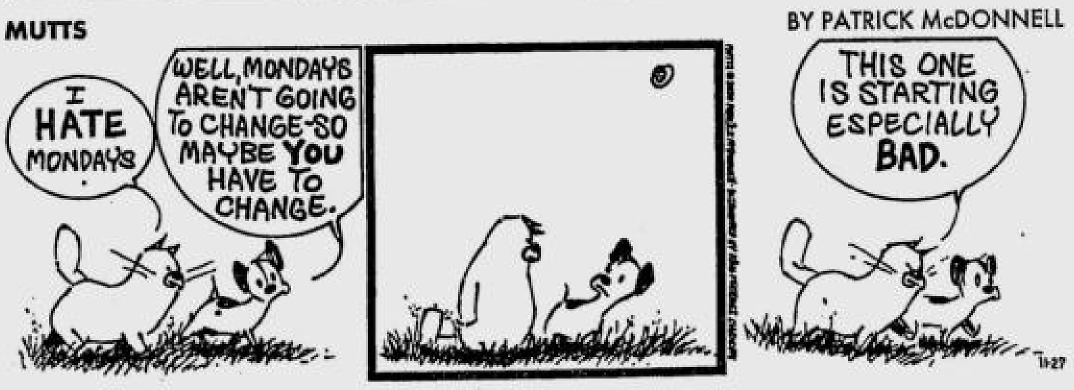
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE YOU GO MY LITTLE PHILODENDRON SCANDENS... I HOPE YOU'RE THIRSTY.
AND HOW ARE YOU FICUS ELASTICA? WOULD YOU LIKE A LITTLE BIT OF FERTILIZER?
AHEM...
I REALLY THINK THEY APPRECIATE BEING CALLED BY THEIR REAL NAMES...
SHELTON

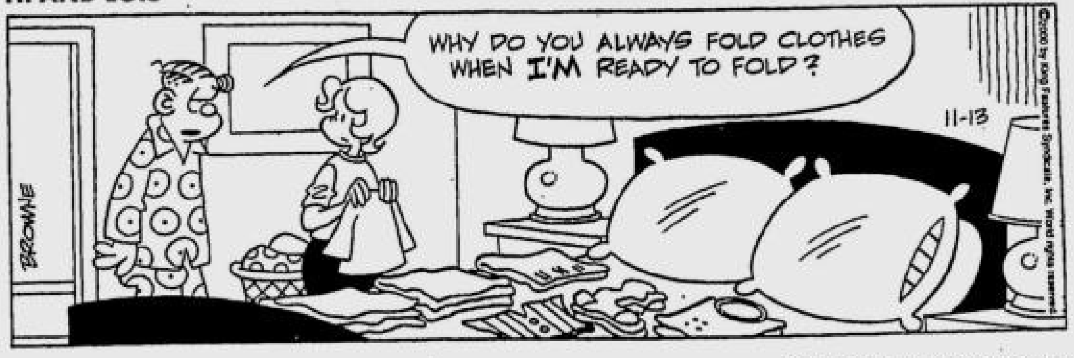
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I HATE MONDAYS
WELL, MONDAYS AREN'T GOING TO CHANGE-SO MAYBE YOU HAVE TO CHANGE.
THIS ONE IS STARTING ESPECIALLY BAD.
1-27

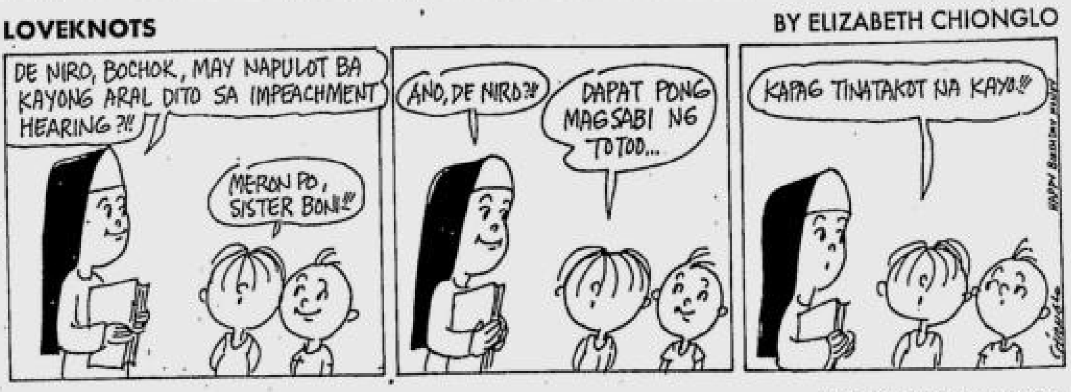
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WHY DO YOU ALWAYS FOLD CLOTHES WHEN I'M READY TO FOLD?
11-13
BROWNE

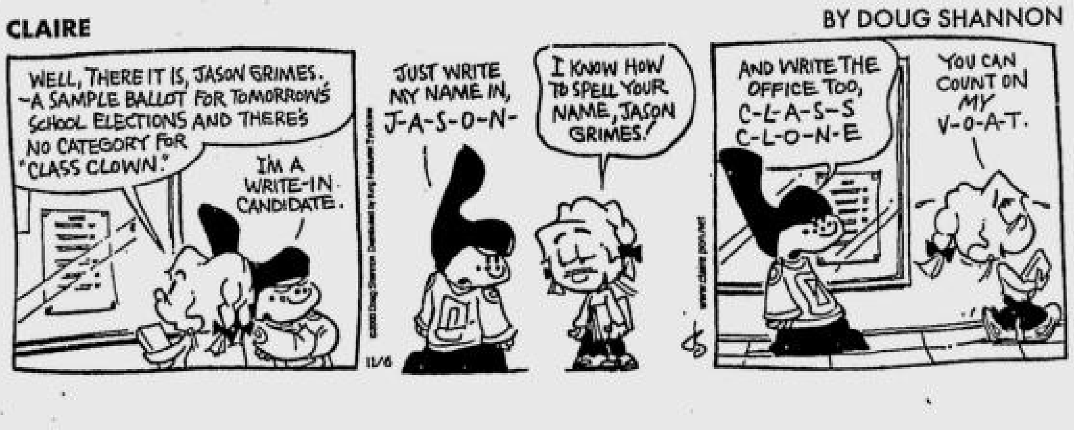
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

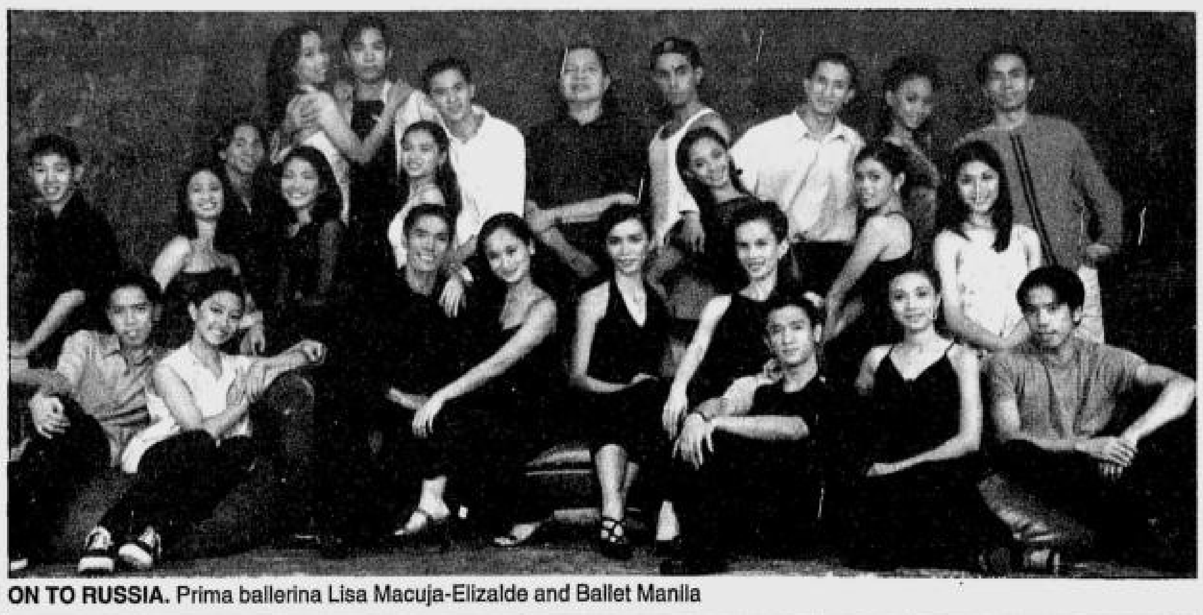

DE NIRO, BOCHOK, MAY NAPULOT BA KAYONG ARAL DITO SA IMPEACHMENT HEARING?!!
MERON PO, SISTER BONI!!
ANO, DE NIRO?!!
DAPAT PONG MAGSABI NG TOTOO...
KAPAG TINATAKOT NA KAYO!!

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


WELL, THERE IT IS, JASON GRIMES. —A SAMPLE BALLOT FOR TOMORROW'S SCHOOL ELECTIONS AND THERE'S NO CATEGORY FOR "CLASS CLOWN."
I'M A WRITE-IN CANDIDATE.
JUST WRITE MY NAME IN, J-A-S-O-N-
I KNOW HOW TO SPELL YOUR NAME, JASON GRIMES!
AND WRITE THE OFFICE TOO, C-L-A-S-S C-L-O-N-E
YOU CAN COUNT ON MY V-O-A-T.
11/6

Macuja-Elizalde returns to St. Petersburg for Winter Nights fest



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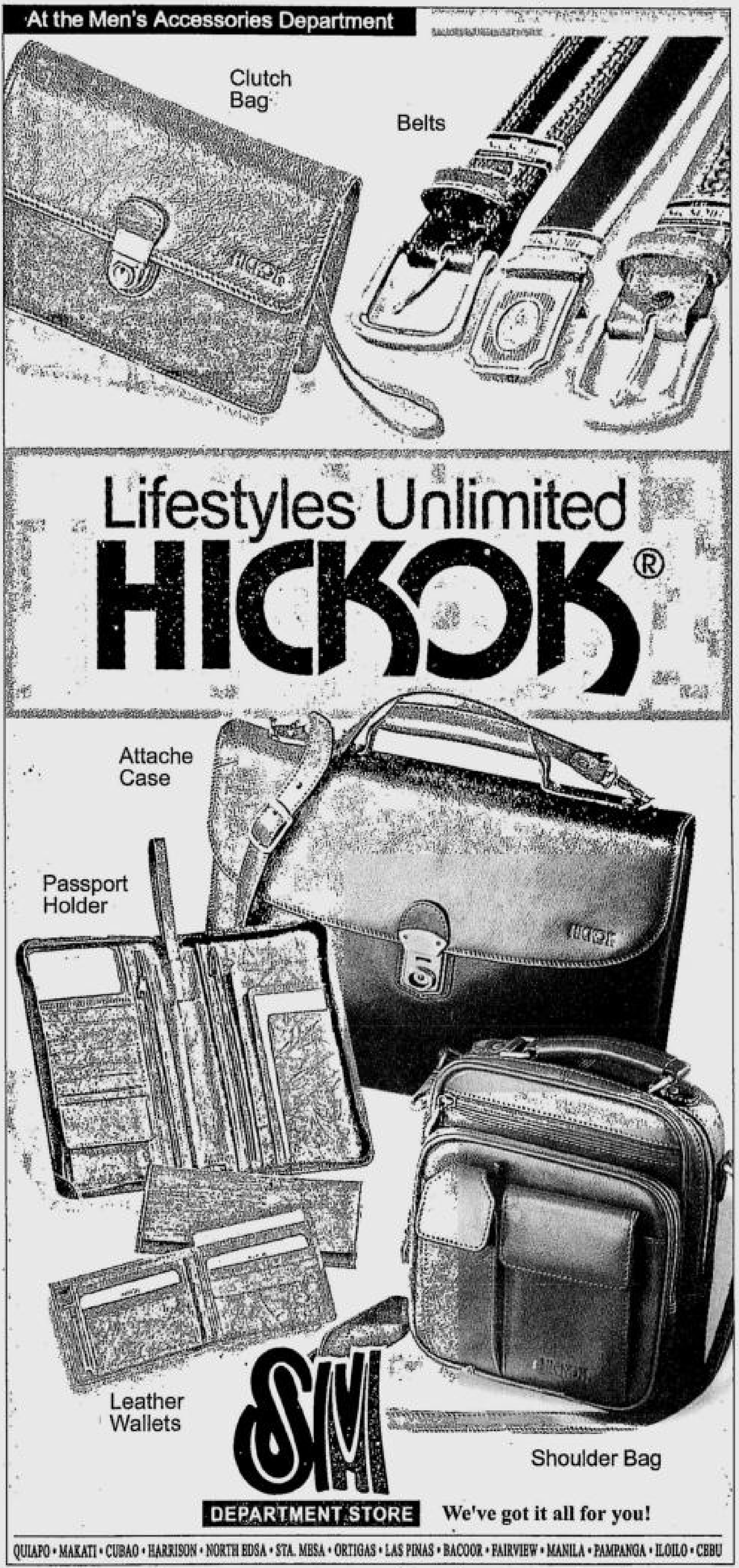

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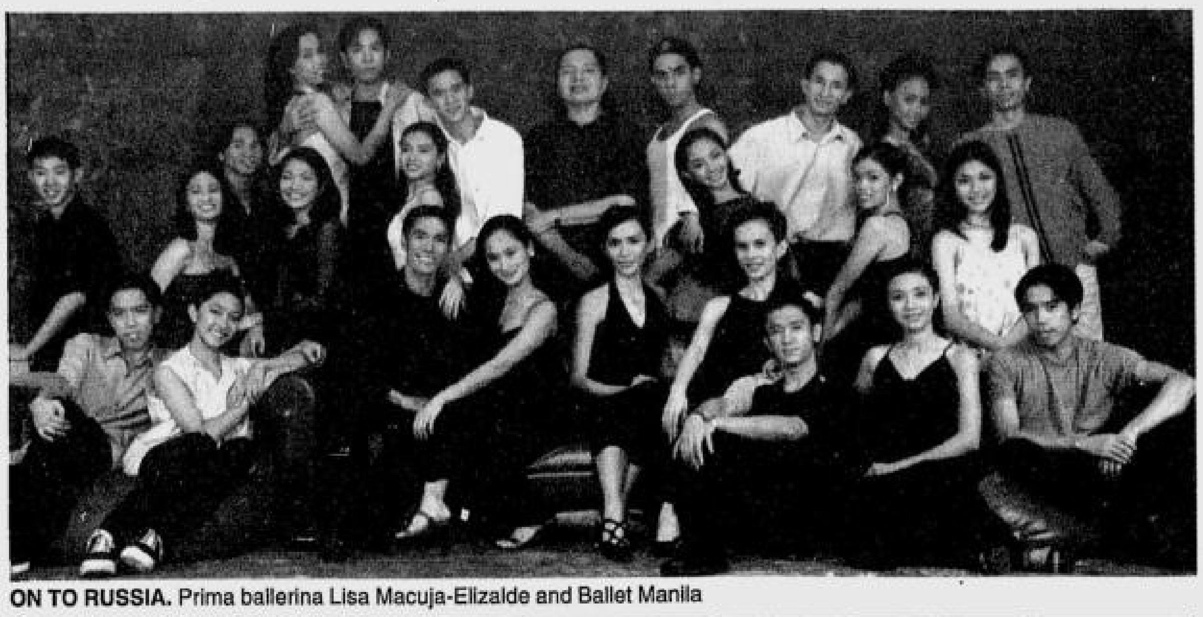
Macuja-Elizalde returns to St. Petersburg for Winter Nights fest



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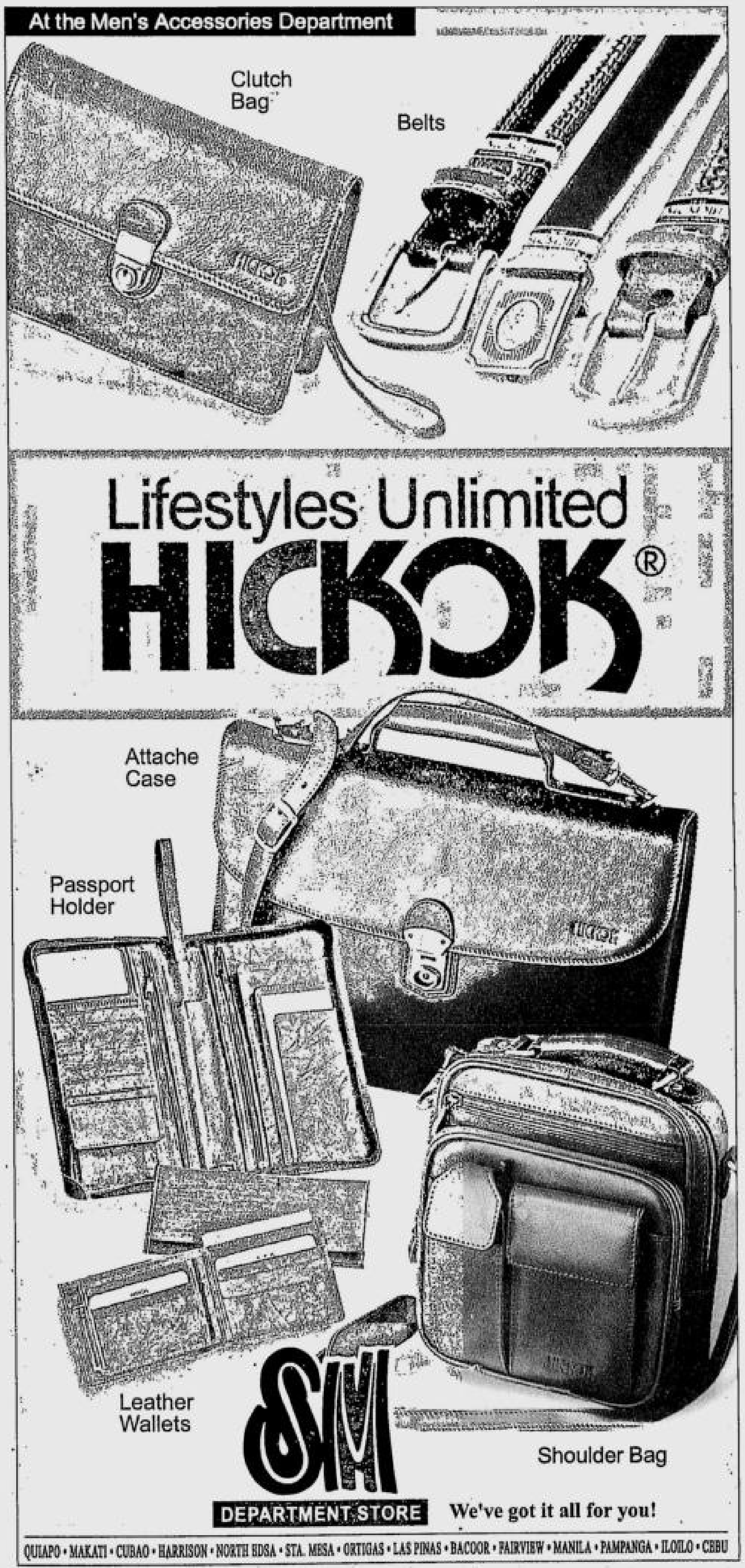
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ALEX ROSS

Marvel's days of future past

By Ruel S. De Vera

"Marvels"
By Kurt Busiek and Alex Ross
Marvel Comics, New York
1999, 230 pages

"Earth X"
By Alex Ross, Jim Krueger, John Paul Leon and Bill Reinhold
Marvel Comics, New York
2000, 472 pages

REVIEW

TRADE paperbacks are the secret weapons of the comic industry. Books that compile issues of a comic book series, trade paperbacks allow readers, including those who do not regularly read comic books, to experience a series in its entirety without having to wait month after month. In a way, trade paperbacks allow comic book creators to showcase the power of their works in a medium best suited to the form. Several trade paperbacks have already been rightfully recognized as works of art, such as Alan Moore's "Watchmen" and Neil Gaiman's "The Sandman" volumes from DC Comics.

Yet Marvel Comics, home of some of the most recognizable characters, has finally caught on, and two recent trade paperbacks from the company display not only the impressive talent of the most sought-after comic talent today, but also the origins and the possible future of the Marvel Universe itself.

That talent, of course, is painter Alex Ross, who has energized comics with his distinctly photo-realistic style of visuals. Yet with these books, Ross also shows he can do a lot more than just draw.

"Marvels" was a four-issue limited series unlike any other when it was published in 1994. Written by veteran writer Kurt Busiek ("Avengers," "Astro City"), "Marvels" retold the history of the Marvel Universe from the point of view of an everyman, newspaper photographer Phil Sheldon. From the creation of the first Human Torch in 1939, "Marvels" depicts the storied history of the Marvel characters through Sheldon's life and his photographs. A central element is the wonder, fear or admiration that normal people feel as the super-powered beings (dubbed Marvels, thus the book's title) come out into public attention. Busiek captures the feeling perfectly when Sheldon says, upon seeing the Avengers in early action, that "it was life or death. It was grand opera. It was the greatest show on earth, and we, every single one of us, had the best seat in the house."

Two books display the versatile talents of comic book superstar Alex Ross

Best seat

We were also in the best seat to witness the first breakthrough work of Ross. No one had ever seen such realistic illustrations in a comic book, achieved through Ross' obsession with detail and precision. He used models and sources to make "Marvels" come alive. Never before had readers appreciated the sheen of Iron Man's armor, the arachnid grace of Spiderman's movement, even the sheer size of Giant-man. Ross was the perfect illustrator for "Marvels." The book itself is a bracing, awe-inspiring tour through the Marvel history, from the Second World War all the way to the modern age. Paced well, the book's panels breathe and are accessible even to those completely unfamiliar with Marvel's history. It is simply a good, short read, especially for those who are not familiar with the Marvel story.

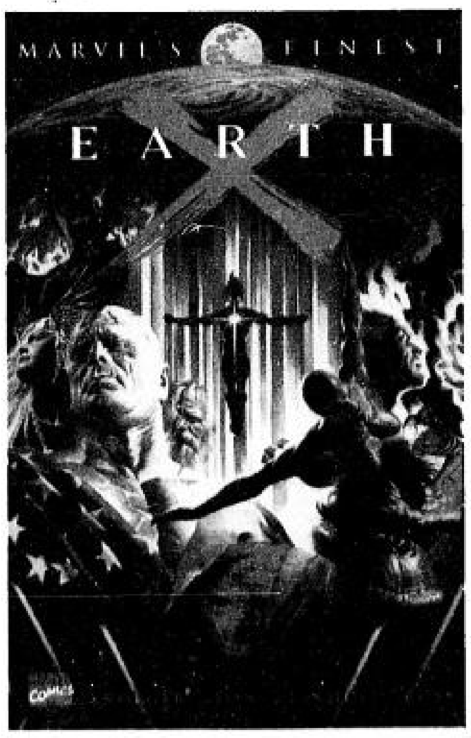
Through the years, Ross has emerged as a true superstar in the comic book industry, doing work for other comic companies. Yet when Ross returned to Marvel in 1999 to work on yet another series that spoke of the Marvel Universe, he came not as illustrator (save for the beautiful covers) but as co-plotter and character designer. "Earth X," a massive 14-issue series that pondered the possibility of a dark, violent future for the Marvels, also featured co-plotter Jim Krueger, penciller John Paul Leon and inker Bill Reinhold. Even with the considerable talents of the gathered cast, Ross (who had brilliantly imagined a similarly bleak future for the DC Universe with the book "Kingdom Come") had his fingerprints all over "Earth X."

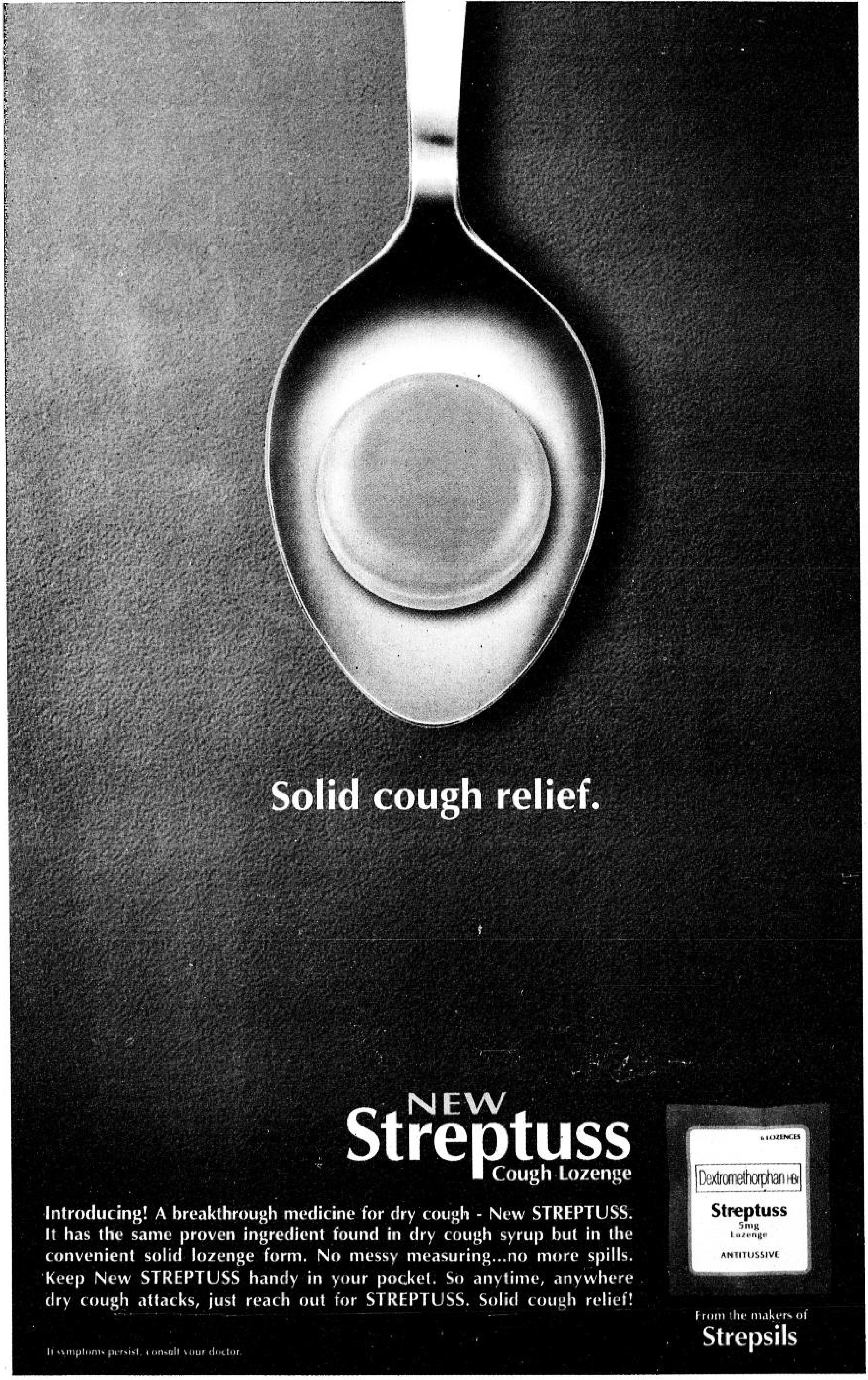
Coming undone

"Earth X's" premise is that something has caused all of humanity to mutate and develop powers in the future. Now the world order is coming undone because the new Red Skull, a boy with the power to control any human, is gathering followers to take over America. Many of the old Marvels are either dead or missing. And there is an even greater mystery and danger lurking in the dark reaches of outer space, and in the heart of the earth. The labyrinthine plot of "Earth X" goes to the very origins of the Marvel Universe, explaining many of its mysteries, and in effect turning "Marvels" inside out. Considerably more dense and complicated than "Marvels," "Earth X" is text-heavy and more static, definitely more difficult to read. But it is also a story with a larger scope, with a more epic scale though it does require at least a rudimentary knowledge of the Marvel Universe and its characters' diverse histories. Yet "Earth X" also offers a tantalizing look at new characters and concepts, such as a new group of X-Men, a robotic team of Avengers, and the reappearance of many obscure yet compelling Marvels like X-51 the Machine Man. It also features more deaths and soul-searching that "Marvels."

Yet combined, "Marvels" and "Earth X" are bookends to the reacquired dynamism and richness of the Marvel Universe. Whether your taste is pretty and uplifting, or brooding and foreboding, Ross acquits himself well with these two books. Whether painting, designing or plotting, Ross shows that he does deserve the many accolades and fans that he has gathered. And these two exciting, impressive and extremely fascinating trade paperbacks from Marvel Comics are exemplars of the kind of artistic highs that the comic industry can produce.

Both titles are available in paperback from Comic Quest.





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